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PUSHKIN—GREAT RUSSIAN POET

By Prof. A. M. Yegolin

Director of the Gorky Institute of World Literature, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

The "Journal" makes its contribution to the important Pushkin anniversary being celebrated in the U.S.S.R. by introducing readers to Pushkin through articles by three different writers and through some of his poems. Any discrepancy in the poems and their quotation in the articles is due to differing translations.

ALEXANDER SERGEYEVICH PUSHKIN, the great national poet of Russia, was the founder of modern Russian literature. His work has enriched our culture with literature of exceptional artistic power. With the keen insight of the artist, the poet divined his country's historic mission, and with consummate skill he reflected in his work the specific features of Russian life in his day and time, the thoughts and feelings, hopes and aspirations of the advanced men of his time.

Pushkin turned to the language of the people and created an all-Russian literary language comprehensible to all: "a language understood equally well by all classes."

The creation of a great Russian literature and a literary language was a historic, national achievement for the writer. In the eyes of the people Pushkin was a poetic genius who sang of the life in his native country in fascinating verse, a poet whose work was saturated with noble and advanced ideas.

Nikolai Gogol brilliantly characterised the poet during his own lifetime. "The name Pushkin immediately brings to mind the idea of a Russian national poet. Indeed, none of our poets surpasses him or has more right to be called national; this right definitely belongs to him. Like some thesaurus, all the wealth, power and flexibility of our language is contained in him. He, more than all others, has pushed its boundaries further and has best shown its potentialities. Pushkin is something out of the ordinary, and perhaps the only prodigy of the Russian spirit . . . The Russian natural scene, the Russian spirit, the Russian language, the Russian character are reflected in him in as pure and chastely beautiful a form as a landscape is reflected in the convex surface of an optic glass."¹

Hertzen, too, noted the poetic reflection of the national spirit, the national strength

in Pushkin's work. "I am referring to that inner strength," he wrote, "thanks to which despite the humiliating discipline of slavery, the Russian peasant has preserved an open, handsome face and a lively mind, and which, one hundred years later replied to the imperial (Peter I) command to introduce civilisation by producing so prodigious a marvel as Pushkin."²

Pushkin's role as the founder of modern Russian literature is clearly seen when his work is compared with the literature which preceded him. In defining Pushkin's place in history the great Russian critic Vissarion Belinsky drew a broad picture of literary development, noted Pushkin's distinguished forerunners—Derzhavin, Batyushkov, Zhukovsky, and wrote Pushkin's muse, "absorbed . . . the works of the poets who preceded him" and "returned them to the world in a new, transmuted form."

The development of Russian literature in the 19th century was greatly influenced by an important event in Russian history—the War of 1812. Pushkin—a beloved friend of his from the Lycée they both attended—relates in his memoirs: "Our life in the Lycée merged with that political era which saw an upsurge of popular feeling in Russian life: the storm of 1812 was gathering. These events strongly influenced our childhood."

The war left a deep and lasting impression on Pushkin and aroused his keen interest in social problems.

Recalling those heroic days he wrote:—

"You remember: The armies flowed
one after another

To elder brothers we said farewell
And then returned in sorrow to our
studious shade

Envious of him who upon the road to
death

Passed us by."

—19th October, 1836.

In the heroic events of the war of 1812 the Russian presented himself to Pushkin in his full stature. Faith in the justness of their cause, love of freedom, bravery, valour, contempt for death—all these national traits of the Russian soldier whose "purpose was either to win or fall in the heat of battle," enhanced the poet's love for his native people who had so bravely defended the country's independence.

The poet took pride in his people, his country. He loved Moscow, the heart of Russia, and was acutely sensitive to its strength and its charm.

With keen insight, with the voice of a man to whom his country's pain is as his own pain, his country's happiness as his own happiness,

even in his youthful poems, he speaks of the great sacrifice made by Moscow in 1812.

Pushkin enthusiastically sang of the liberation of Europe aided by the victories of Russian arms. It is worthy of note that unlike the court historians and the sycophantic courtiers who called Alexander I the saviour of Russia and Europe, Pushkin ascribed the decisive role in the victory of 1812 to the people. Together with Denis Davydov, who held that the chief reason for Russia's military successes was "pricked national pride and passionate love of country," Pushkin saw Russia's strength primarily in the patriotism of the broad masses of the people:—

"And old and young arose; they descend
on the audacious enemy
Their hearts afire with vengeance."

Reminiscences in "Tsarkoe Selo."

The poet sang the praises of Kutuzov as a wise and vigilant general given the trust of the people and the army. He regards him as the saviour of the country from enslavement to a foreign power, and wrote enthusiastically of Kutuzov's role in the history of Russia: "Kutuzov's glory is inseparably connected with the glory of Russia, with the memory of the greatest events of modern history. His title: the saviour of Russia; his monument: the rock of Saint Helena. Not only is his name sacred to us, but should not we also rejoice, we Russians, that it has a Russian savouriness? . . . Only Kutuzov could have offered the Battle of Borodino; only Kutuzov could have surrendered Moscow to the enemy, only Kutuzov could have remained in that wise state of efficient inactivity, lulling Napoleon in fire-ravaged Moscow, waiting for the fatal moment: for only Kutuzov was given the popular trust, which he so wonderfully justified!"

Of no less significance to Pushkin's ideological development than the war of 1812 was the Decembrist movement.³ Pushkin did not formally belong to any secret societies, but in all his work he was the inspired singer of the Decembrists. Together with them he called for rebellion against the tyrants:—

Tremble, ye tyrants of the world!
And ye, take courage and give ear,
Arise, ye fallen slaves!

"Ode to Freedom."

It was to them, his Decembrist friends, exiled and sentenced to hard labour after the suppression of their uprising, that the poet addressed the following passionate lines, full of faith in the justness of their cause:—

Deep in the Siberian mine,
Keep your patience proud;
The bitter toil shall not be lost,
The rebel thought unbowed.

"Message to Siberia," 1827.

Genuine love of their country stimulated progressive men to fight for its liberation from both foreign invaders and the reactionary forces of Tsarism. In Pushkin's notebook we find the following remarkable entry:—"Only a revolutionary head . . .

can love Russia, just as only a writer can love the language."⁴

To Pushkin's mind the patriot and the revolutionary were synonymous terms. Pushkin's own love for his country was bound up with awareness of the necessity of fighting serfdom and autocratic oppression so well expressed in the poem "To Chaadayev."

THE dominant motif of the young poet's work is praise of political liberty. "Pushkin made his debut with revolutionary poems of great beauty," said Herten. His "Ode to Liberty," "The Village," and numerous poems and epigrams of his post-Lycée period are eloquent testimony to Pushkin's ideals as a progressive man of his time.

In 1820 Pushkin wrote his first long poem—"Ruslan and Lyudmila." It was enthusiastically acclaimed by his friends, by the reading public, and the famous Russian poet V. A. Zhukovsky. The brilliance of his talent, the free and unrestrained flow of his language, and the charming treatment of Russian folklore images heralded the appearance of a poetic star. Only the reactionary aesthetic critics from among the nobility were filled with indignation at the popular spirit of the poem: they sharply condemned the "obscene words and comparisons" in it, its "peasant rhythms" which offend "the good taste customary to graceful literature."

Pushkin's succeeding poems, written in the south of Russia, where he was exiled for his freedom loving-verses, testified further that he was not only exceptionally talented, but he was also a man of progressive views. In his romantic poems "The Prisoner of the Caucasus" (1821) and "The Gypsies" (1824) he portrayed people who were striving to escape from the "slavery of stifling cities." In these poems, permeated by the idea of individual freedom, free life is contrasted to fashionable life, bound fast by the conventions of aristocratic society.

Pushkin very quickly outgrew his interest in romanticism. As time passed his work approached more closely the reality of Russian life. One of his most important contributions, as Dobrolyubov correctly discerned, was his "discovery of reality" in Russian literature.

An important step in this direction was Pushkin's drama "Boris Godunov" (1824-25). While working on this he made it his aim to "resurrect one of the bygone ages in all its truth." He stressed the features of his realistic approach to character portraits: "Pimen is not my invention. In him I have collected the traits which fascinated me in our old annalists . . .", he wrote.

The poet painted vivid pictures of the ambitious courtiers, showed the leading role played by the people in the political struggle which took place at the end of the 16th century. With "Boris Godunov" Pushkin

aimed to reform Russian dramaturgy, to bring a popular spirit to the Russian theatre. He boldly declared that drama must abandon the castles and come out into the square."

In "Boris Godunov" as in other of his historical works—"Poltava" (1830), "The Bronze Horseman" (1833), "The Captain's Daughter" (1834), "The History of the Pugachev Uprisings" (1832-1833)—the theme of native country is developed through images of the past.

The great writer had a profound respect for Russia's historical figures, irrespective of their social status. "The names of both Minin and Lomonosov will probably outweigh all our high-born lineages," he wrote. And again "To take pride in the glory of our ancestors, is not only permissible but even obligatory; not to respect it is a sign of shameful cravenness;".

Pushkin immortalised in poetic form the historic work of Peter I—the great reformer of Russia. "Russia," wrote the poet, "entered Europe like a newly launched ship, with hammers pounding and guns roaring. But the wars of Peter brought great benefit. The successful national reformation was the result of the battle of Poltava . . ."⁵

The battle of Poltava, that heroic exploit of the Russian people, which was so decisive in the struggle for the country's future, was sung by the poet in his "Poltava"—a heroic poem, the best pages of which are devoted to a description of the emerging national spirit and the enthusiasm of the country's defenders. The battle scenes in "Poltava" are among the unforgettable classics of Russian poetry.

Pushkin the realist, reflected the thoughts of the great Russian people, and faith in the creative powers and might of his country. The work which marks the pinnacle of the poet's realism is his novel in verse "Evgeny Onegin" (1823-1830). In this the poet, with the pen of a consummate master, delineates his age with tremendous artistic power, and presents broad and vivid pictures of Russian life and of the poetic Russian landscape. Belinsky called "Evgeny Onegin" an encyclopaedia of Russian life, the first genuinely national Russian novel in verse. Indeed, in this work Pushkin presented a poetic reflection of a whole historic phase in the life of Russian society in the last century.

"As a type," Maxim Gorky wrote, "Onegin was only taking shape in the 1820's, but the poet immediately perceived this new type of psychology, studied it, understood it and wrote the first Russian realistic novel, which in addition to its undying beauty has the value of an historical document, drawing a more accurate and lifelike picture of the age than is drawn in scores of big fat books to this day."⁶

"Onegin" is Pushkin's sincerest work, the darling of his fantasy, and few works can be cited in which the individuality of the poet is mirrored so fully, brightly and clearly as that of "Onegin." Here we have his whole life, his soul, his love; here we have his emotions, conceptions and ideals. To appraise such a work means appraising the

poet in the whole range of his creative activity. Apart from the aesthetic merits of Onegin, this poem possesses great historic and social significance for us Russians"⁷

In the 1830's Pushkin's attention was fixed on one of the most important problems of the age: the relations between the landlords and the peasant serfs. He drew very clear pictures of the popular uprisings, the rebellions of the peasants against the landlords ("The Captain's Daughter," "The Story of the Pugachev Uprising," "Dubrovsky"—1833). Aware of the landlords' brutal treatment of the peasant serfs, Pushkin recognised the lawfulness of the peasant uprisings. "All the common folk were for Pugachev . . ." he wrote. "Only the nobility frankly sided with the Government. Pugachev and his followers at first tried to win the nobility over to their side, but their interests were too sharply opposed."⁸ Pushkin portrayed Pugachev as a peasant leader closely connected with the people, a clever, keen-witted man with a deep self-respect.

Pushkin remained true to his freedom-loving ideas even in the 'thirties. Determining his place in history, Hertenzen wrote: "Only Pushkin's ample singing voice was to be heard in the valleys of slavery and suffering: his song continued the past era, filled the present with courageous notes and sent its voice into the remote future.

His poetry was a guarantee of the future and a consolation."⁹

Pushkin had every right to say of himself in the first line of his poem "Monument," written in 1836, "I have raised a monument not wrought by human skill."

While characterising the poet as a son of his age grown up in an aristocratic environment, Belinsky convincingly proved that at the same time the poet was popular in spirit. His work gave expression to the progressive tendencies of his age and was thereby placed at the service of the people, helped them to advance the more successfully along the road of their emancipation. Gorky spoke of Pushkin with amazing insight.

"We must be able to disencumber him from all his fortuitous traits, all the elements due to the conditions of the time or individually inherited—everything owing its existence to his aristocratic origin, everything transitory—these are not ours, these are alien and unnecessary to us. But then, after we have cast all this aside, then the great Russian national poet shall rise up before us . . . A poet unsurpassed to this day in beauty of verse and power of expressing his feelings and thoughts, a poet who was the founder of the great Russian literature."

Pushkin belonged to those "finest people" of the nobility.

THE poet set an immeasurably higher value upon the popular masses than upon aristocratic society. Through the lips of Polina, the heroine of his story "Roslavlev,"

he drew a contrast between the "good common people" and "the fashionable scum."

While praising the heroic struggle of the common Russian people, who rose up in defence of their country in the war of 1812, the poet ridicules the external, ostentatious "patriotism" of aristocratic society... "which emptied the French tobacco out of its pouches and began to use Russian tobacco; which burned scores of French pamphlets, which gave up Lafitte, and which took to cabbage soup."

He sought the wellsprings of true poetry in the popular movements, in the life of the people. In his opinion Stepan Razin was "the most poetic figure in Russian history." In the last years of his life Pushkin turned to the history of the Pugachev rebellion; he began to collect material on it and planned to visit Orenburg and other sites of the Pugachev uprising in the Urals for this purpose.

Pushkin showed the creative power of the people, people capable of great things. Pugachev's army won a battle in which he faced experienced regular army units commanded by Catherine's generals. He ably roused the people to struggle against the landlords. Pushkin notes: "Pugachev's first stirring appeal to the Cossacks is a remarkable example of popular eloquence."

In the Russian people Pushkin perceived inexhaustible creative powers. This explains the interest the poet took in folk art all his life long. He studied the life of the peasantry, recorded folk songs, listened to story tellers, pondered the significance of Russian proverbs. "What splendour, what sense, what meaning in every one of our proverbs! What a goldmine!" he wrote. Speaking of folk tales, the poet remarked that every one of them "is a poem." "Study of the old songs, tales, &c., is essential for thorough knowledge of the Russian language," he said.¹⁰ He himself left us marvellous examples of the literary value of Russian folk tales. "The Tale of the Tsar Sultan" (1831), "The Tale of the Priest and his Workman Balda" (1831), "The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish" (1833), and others were invaluable contributions to the treasury of Russian art.

To quote Gorky's apt definition, "... Pushkin was the first Russian writer to pay attention to folk lore and introduce it into literature... he embellished the folk song and folktale with the lustre of his own talent, but left their meaning and power intact."¹¹

The fact that the critics and writers of the revolutionary-democratic trend: Belinsky, Herten, Chernyshevsky, and Dobrolyubov, were the first to present a true estimation of Pushkin's work helps considerably in a proper historical appraisal of it.

Chernyshevsky defined Pushkin's historical role so vividly and accurately that his evaluation retains its power to this day. "Through him," he wrote, "literary education spread to scores of thousands of people, whereas before him very few had any

literary inclinations. He was the first to invest our literature with the dignity of a national cause, whereas before, it was as an old journal expressed it in one of its headings, a pleasant and useful means of whiling away the time for a narrow circle of dilettantes. He was the first poet to rise to the heights in the eyes of the entire Russian public as great writers should in their country. All the potentialities for further development possessed by Russian literature were planted and in part are still being planted by Pushkin."¹²

In Chernyshevsky's opinion Pushkin was a poet who demanded "ideas, deep content." Sharply criticising the aristocratic poetry of his day, emphasising its exclusive concern with the "external forms of words," ridiculing the "aesthetic dropsy" of the literary men of his day, the critic showed the great difference between them and Pushkin and the principles of Pushkin's work. He said that he had "a hundred times more content than all his colleagues taken together."

Dobrolyubov stressed the point that Pushkin, who had made "The discovery of reality," was to the end of his days a poet who was keenly interested in the contemporary problems. He presented a wonderful characterisation of Pushkin as a poet who "directed" the forces of the people towards those problems of historical significance which the Russian people had to solve. This indicated the existence of close bonds between the democratic literature of the 1860's and Pushkin's work. Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov considered Pushkin's work of exceptional importance in shaping the literature of the succeeding period.

The poet's accurate description of the life in the Russia of his time, his love of freedom, his ardent sympathy with the people, his critical attitude and sharp condemnation of everything sluggish and reactionary in the life of the time, won great praise from the democratic critics.

The true heirs of Pushkin in the 'sixties were the poets and writers of the revolutionary-democratic trend. Lenin said that to preserve a heritage is far from meaning that one must confine oneself to that heritage. Shchedrin and Nekrasov developed the Pushkin realism under new conditions.

Another great successor of Pushkin in the 'fifties and 'sixties was Nekrasov who, working under new conditions, further developed the principal features of Pushkin's poetry: profundity of ideas, popular spirit, realism, simplicity, and clarity in expressing feelings and thoughts. Nekrasov looked upon Pushkin as his teacher.

Pushkin's immortal works, surging with humanity, singing the independence of the individual live on. The work of the great Russian poet is an inexhaustible wellspring of ideas and principles for the training of our youth.

The love millions of citizens of the Socialist land cherish for Pushkin is that majestic monument "not wrought by human skill," about which the inspired poet of the Russian people dreamt.

PUSHKIN

By Prof. D. Blagoy

A HUNDRED and twelve years have elapsed since the day Pushkin passed away, but he still continues to live in our midst. Now too we turn to him, as we would to a contemporary, with the numerous problems that trouble us, and always we find a solution, and a wise inspired answer.

Almost from the very beginning of his literary career Pushkin strove to make literature a powerful social force, and demanded that writers raise important contemporary issues and do not confine themselves to poetic "trifles."

Pushkin repeatedly waxed ironic over the speed and readiness with which critics of his time proclaimed every one a poet who had the knack of writing verse. He was convinced that poetry was not composed merely of fluent verse, but of "deep emotions and poetic ideas." He had no use whatever for poetry that was devoid of such emotions and ideas and was "used only for the presentation of pleasant forms." "The language of ideas" was what Pushkin called artistic prose. "It calls for ideas and more ideas—without which brilliant expressions are worthless."

It was this striving for maximum of intellectual content in an artistic production that caused Pushkin to insist on "noble simplicity" of poetic speech, and to dispense with everything superfluous, all "conventional ornaments." From the very beginning of his literary career, Pushkin fought persistently for noble, advanced ideological content in belles-lettres. "It would not hurt our poets to have more significant ideas than they are wont to have. Our literature will not advance very far by recalling its past youth," he wrote at the beginning of the 'twenties. He fought for poetry which would reflect all the topics of social life, that would meet the essential requisites of the time. "Our enlightened century calls for serious subjects as food for thought for minds which are no longer content with brilliant play of imagination and harmony." But in order to meet these demands the author himself should keep pace with the times, should absorb its most advanced ideas.

While himself not a member of any secret organisation of the Decembrists, Pushkin was an inspired prophet of the most advanced ideas of the revolutionary-minded nobility of his time. The overwhelming hatred of the "despotic villains" on the throne and the depth of civic spirit that marked passionately the "savage nobility," in his freedom poetry, had a tremendous revolutionising effect. And although this poetry had its historical limitations, characteristic of Decembrism,

it brought out strikingly the charm typical of the first generation of Russian revolutionaries—vivid freedom-loving aspirations, exultant, passionate enthusiasm, ardent patriotism, warm faith in the triumph of "sacred freedom." Such was Pushkin's first message to Chaadayev, regarded by his contemporaries and by the following generations as a youthful declaration of love of country and revolution.

In "Boris Godunov," Pushkin boldly stressed the great import of "popular opinion," and in the finale of that tragedy he made the people—though still silent—the real and formidable judge of the crimes committed by the Tsar and the boyars. Pushkin also raised a problem that was particularly acute in the period marked by the activity of the revolutionary-minded nobility, the problem of the gulf that existed between high-born progressive intellectuals and the people. In "Evgeny Onegin," Pushkin not only unfolded a whole "encyclopaedia of Russian life" in the 'twenties of the 19th century, but as a "friend, brother, comrade," of the Decembrists, judged strictly and passed severe sentence upon many a stagnant and reactionary phenomena of his day. With the keen eye of an artist he observed even the political and economic causes of many a phenomenon that occurred in the life of the Russian society of his time. The poet formulated with such precision the economic processes taking place in the Russian serf economy that Marx found it fitting to quote some of the lines from "Evgeny Onegin" in his politico-economic works, while Engels in a letter to one of his Russian correspondents wrote: "When we study . . . the real economic relations in the different countries at various stages of civilisation, how strangely erroneous and insufficient we find the rationalistic generalisations of the 18th century, say, for instance, of dear old Adam Smith, who regarded the conditions existing in Edinburgh and the neighbouring Scottish counties as normal for the whole universe! Your Pushkin had already realised this . . ." This remarkable testimony of Engels' is eloquent proof of the unusual scope of Pushkin's horizon, of the inspired foresight of that artist and thinker.

Pushkin's articles written towards the end of his life are bitter about the English and American "democracies,"—the only forms of supposedly "popular rule" of the time. He pointed out with remarkable foresight and energy for his time, the dark sides of those "democracies," they are reminiscent of Herzen's subsequent stinging criticism of the Western bourgeoisie. Here is Pushkin on English capitalism: "Read the complaints of the English factory workers: your hair will stand on end with horror. How much atrocity, what incomprehensible torture

What cold barbarity on the one hand, and what dire poverty on the other! You might think this is the story of the building of the pharaohs' pyramids, or of the Jews toiling under the lashes of the Egyptians. Not at all: it is the story of Mr. Smith's fabrics, or Mr. Jackson's needles." His description of American "democracy" was even more stinging: "With amazement have we seen democracy in all its abominable cynicism, its cruel prejudices, its intolerable tyranny. Everything noble, unselfish, everything that elevates the human soul, crushed by ruthless egoism and a passion for comfort . . . Negro slavery amidst education and liberty . . ."

Pushkin's position became tragic when the Decembrists' craft was smashed to smithereens by the squall, when both the "helm-man and the mariner" perished, when Pushkin found himself surrounded by Benkendorffs and Bulgarins—the old trash of Alexander's and the new trash of Nicholas' reign, as Herten expressed it. But he was able to resist even that.

The lot of the creator and bearer of songs of courage and hope was however, not an easy one. The stifling atmosphere gave birth to his poems "The Rabble," and "To the Poet," which the reactionary adherents of "pure art" subsequently took up in an endeavour to proclaim Pushkin their leader and teacher. Plekhanov's excellent interpretation of the true historic meaning of those poems is well-known. He proved that by "senseless people" and "the rabble" Pushkin meant not the Russian serf peasantry, but the empty, cold society

rabble of Nicholas' reactionary ministers and the venal journalists of the type of Bulgarin, who demanded that he write in the spirit of autocracy, Orthodox faith, and official nationality.

Pushkin's spiritual drama was born of the post-December reality. The last decade of his life was the period when the Decembrist revolutionary spirit had died and the new generation of Russian revolutionaries—the generation of revolutionary democrats—was not yet mature. While seeing no new social forces around him, the poet, nevertheless, foresaw from whence they were to come. This is best seen in his attempt, shortly before his death, to draw Belinsky into joint journalistic work.

There is a remarkable testimony of Mickiewicz's relating to that very period when Pushkin wrote his wrathful address to "the rabble." According to Mickiewicz, Pushkin "despised those authors who wrote aimlessly, he did not favour the philosophical scepticism and artistic sangfroid which he perceived in Goethe's work." In the 'thirties Pushkin wrote his highly ideological works which include "History of the village of Goryukhino," "Dubrovsky," "The Captain's Daughter," and "Scenes from Knighthood Days."

To-day too, he plays an active part in our struggle for progressive popular art.

An inspired bearer of progressive ideals and an ardent patriot, our immortal Pushkin, who, following Radishchev, glorified freedom, was the founder of the great Russian literature.

1. N. V. Gogol. *Collected Works*, Vol. VI, 1937, P. 59.
2. A. Herten. *Collected Works*, edited by I. Lemke, Vol. V, P. 342.
3. Decembrists—revolutionaries of noble birth, participants in the uprising against the Tsarist autocracy on December 14, 1825.
4. A. S. Pushkin, *Collected Works*, P. 260, 1936, Russ. ed.
5. A. S. Pushkin, *Works*, 1948, P. 7885, Russ. ed.
6. Maxim Gorky. *On Pushkin*.
7. V. G. Belinsky. *Selected Philosophical Works*. Eng. ed., Moscow. 1948, p. 197.
8. A. S. Pushkin. *Works*, 1948, Russ. ed. P. 702.
9. A. I. Herten. *Collected Works*, Vol. VI, Russ. ed., p. 365.
10. A. S. Pushkin, *Works*, Vol. V, p. 325.
11. M. Gorky. *On Pushkin*.
12. N. G. Chernyshevsky. *Collected Works*, Vol I, pp. 290-291.

PUSHKIN—1799-1949

By Henry Gifford

(The translations are by Mr. Gifford)

IT happens that the two greatest poets of the nineteenth century are both commemorated this year. Goethe was fifty only a few months after the birth of Pushkin in 1799. He knew nothing of his younger contemporary; nor had Pushkin, indeed, much to say about Goethe, "the giant of romantic literature," as he once described him. Perhaps there is no common standard to measure these two men.

The contrasts between them are striking enough. Goethe belonged in many ways to the century in which he had grown up. He was aristocratic in his outlook, a conservative and a cosmopolitan. Pushkin, the child of a new age, whose representative Goethe saw in Byron, was born an aristocrat, but his youth was radical, and his later years showed him uncompromising to Tsarism, even in his equivocal position as *Kammerjunker*. He was never a cosmopolitan. Bred to speak French and to venerate Voltaire, he became conversant with the literatures of many countries, including our own. Once he described himself as the foreign minister of the Russian Parnassus. A foreign minister's first duty is to his own people; and Pushkin viewed the West as Peter the Great had done. He wanted to enrich the Russian soil. Not for him the cold cosmopolitanism of Goethe; he was Russia's poet, and at the time when he was writing *Boris Godunov* and *Eugeny Onegin*, his first audience was a peasant woman, Arina Rodionovna, Pushkin's nurse.

Thinking of Goethe we imagine that stately old man with the Olympian countenance and serene spirit. Pushkin died young, a Hamlet struck down by an Osric; but he never could have become an Olympian. "I want to live, that I may think and suffer." Goethe's sublimity was purchased dear: it rested on something like indifference. But Pushkin, as Belinsky said, was "an affectionate being, sympathetic, ready out of the fullness of his heart to stretch a hand to anyone whom he thought 'a man.'" Goethe has left his mark on the world's literature, Pushkin primarily on that of his own country. But Russian literature was destined to be the richest of modern Europe, and its debt to him is incalculable.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin was born in Moscow on the 26th May, 1799. His family was an old one, but reckless living had squandered their wealth, and Pushkin was always a poor man. On the mother's side, he was descended from the famous

Hannibal, an Ethiopian prince who as a boy had been presented to Peter the Great, and became eventually a general in the Russian army. Pushkin grew up among men of letters. His uncle Vassily Lvovich was a satirist of some reputation; and Pushkin as a child had looked with awe at Karamzin, that daring innovator as he then seemed, who was visiting at his father's house. There were French books to read in the library—especially Voltaire, from whom Pushkin learnt not only dangerous notions but the secrets of a clear style. By the time he was eleven, he was known to be writing verses. Then, in the following year, 1811, he was fortunate enough to get a place in the new Lycée opened by Alexander I at Tsarskoe Selo. This Lycée was housed in a wing of the palace, but several of its masters were advanced thinkers, and French literature was taught by the brother of the great Marat.

Among Pushkin's schoolfellows were Ivan Pushchin, his closest friend, afterwards a Decembrist, and the poets Küchelbecker, also a Decembrist, and Delvig. Those were stirring days to be at school. In Pushkin's first year the French invaded Russia, and were then driven back. The boys not only followed the campaign with enthusiasm, but also drank in the new ideas which were then spreading. The victory over Napoleon brought Russia into the councils of Europe, and many of the young officers returning from Paris asked themselves when the liberty which they had won for others might be theirs too. One of these was Chaadaye, a hussar five years older than Pushkin, who became friendly with him towards the end of the poet's schooldays. This same Chaadaye, a freethinker and Byronic dandy, was to break silence in 1836 with his cry from the heart against the regime of Nicholas I, in the strange *Philosophical Letters* for which the Tsar had him certified as a lunatic. In these days he and Pushkin talked of the overthrow of the autocracy and the abolition of serfdom.

"Comrade, believe: there comes a day
When happiness will dawn delightful,
And Russia drive her sleep away.
The fallen stones of power unrightful
Your name and mine will then display."

So Pushkin wrote to Chaadaye in 1818, after leaving the Lycée. As a schoolboy he had already won renown with his verses. The aged Derzhavin, greatest poet of Catherine's age, had heard Pushkin declaim some of them at a speechday, and recognised the portent. Karamzin and Zhukovsky had their eyes on the young poet. In 1817 he left school and went to St. Petersburg. There he lived recklessly, went into society, and

joined "The Green Lamp," a literary circle connected with the Decembrists. He became a marked man for his epigrams against the Government, and for longer poems such as that called "The Country," which struck boldly at serfdom. Karamzin and Zhukovsky shook their heads over him. With all that wonderful talent, he was driving straight to perdition.

WHEN in March, 1820, Pushkin completed *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, the narrative poem on which he had been working even while at the Lycée, Zhukovsky gave him his portrait inscribed "To the victorious pupil from the defeated master." It was not an exaggeration. Before Pushkin there had been good poets. But like Napoleon among the generals of the French Revolution, he alone judged the hour, saw the materials, and found instinctively the right methods.

Ruslan is an immature poem, and perhaps now, the enthusiasm it then aroused may seem rather strange. But its great merit was boldness. Pushkin divined the verse idiom that was needed at a time when Karamzin still wrote Russian by the light of French and his adversaries made Church Slavonic an article of faith. "In this poem," writes Belinsky, "all was new: the verse, the poetry, the playfulness, its fabulous character together with its serious pictures." They hailed it as a great victory for romanticism, although to modern eyes it looks more than half classical. Most of all, it was a victory for a new style. Pushkin discovered and quickly developed the literary language which Russians have used in the main ever since. At its perfection, which comes with *Onegin*, Pushkin's style is a marvellous means of expression—at once light, flexible and rich.

But he was not allowed to enjoy his triumph. In May, 1820, the Tsar sent him out of Petersburg to a southern exile. He spent four years in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, first touring the Caucasus with the Rayevskys, and then living in Kishinev under the lenient eye of old General Inzov, and finally in Odessa as an uneasy subordinate of the new governor-general, Vorontsov. Outwardly he was as eccentric as any poet, lying in bed till midday, shooting bread pellets at the ceiling, with scraps of verses scattered all round him. His craze was for Byron, and the verse tales he wrote in those years—from *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* (begun in 1820) to *The Gypsies* (1824)—were on Byron's territory. But he was rapidly finding his own way. In the early summer of 1823 he began the first chapter of *Onegin*, "a novel in verse." It resembles *Beppo*, but the poem was to develop into something wholly original—"an encyclopaedia of Russian life," the first truly national work his country had seen, with the exception of Griboyedov's comedy *The Misfortune of Being Clever*. Pushkin in

these years of his Black Sea exile was studying and preparing himself for great poetry. He read Goethe and the Bible, and then Shakespeare. He mingled with the southern group of Decembrists and longed to join their conspiracy, which they wisely kept from him. And then in 1824 Vorontsov decided to get rid of Pushkin. He sent in an adverse report, and Pushkin was banished to his little manor of Mikhailovskoe, near Pskov. Virtually alone, among the forests, in a small wooden house with his old nurse Arina Rodionovna for company, Pushkin during the next two years at Mikhailovskoe, finished his poetical education. It was not only that he absorbed Shakespeare and wrote *Boris Godunov*. In every way he was growing. The new chapters of *Onegin* set his hero in rural Russia, and Pushkin displayed a talent for realistic description, tinged with satire. But he was also discovering the people. Dressed in a red shirt, with that heavy stick whereby he hoped to strengthen his wrist for pistol shooting, Pushkin would wander to the local monastery and sit on the ground among pilgrims and blind men who sang the traditional songs. At home Arina Rodionovna told him popular tales which he wrote down, "compensating for the defects of my cursed education."

Then the blow fell. Alexander I died suddenly; there was confusion about his successor, and when Nicholas came to the throne, the Decembrists rose. Pushkin only heard about it when all was over. He and Delvig were left almost alone, while their friends' fate hung in the balance. Finally, Pestel, whom Pushkin had met and admired, the poet Ryleyev, and three others were hanged, and 120 more sentenced to hard labour in Siberia. Pushkin was appalled. There is a manuscript of his that has survived, in the margin of which he drew a gallows, with five figures. He too was under suspicion. In 1826 the new Tsar sent for him, and there took place an interview which is still obscure. Nicholas thought he had won Pushkin; he was soon to know better.

Pushkin had about ten years to live. They were difficult indeed. Nicholas had graciously appointed himself censor of Pushkin's work, returning the manuscripts through the head of the gendarmes, Benckendorff. It was an unremitting struggle for Pushkin to write the poetry he wanted. In his own day, the world judged him too harshly; but from his correspondence, and from much of his poetry in those years, it is plain that he only gave up some of the outposts. The inner citadel was his own, and all his heart went with the poem of greeting that he sent the Decembrists by the wife of one of them. The trend of his poetry changed.

He wrote *Poltava*, part of which might be a fragment from a national epic. In that wonderful autumn of 1830 at Boldino he produced, besides some 30 lyrics, the "little tragedies" or dramatic scenes, and the prose *Tales of Belkin*. The "little tragedies" are tiny in scope compared with the historical pageant of *Godunov*, but they show a profound insight into character, and their

formal perfection is unsurpassed even by Pushkin. Then in 1833 he created that strange allegory of *The Bronze Horseman*, in which Peter the Great's statue pursues a heart-broken young clerk round the moonlit capital. In 1836 came *The Captain's Daughter*, a novel about the rebellion of Pugachev, on which, as on the career of Peter, he had spent a great deal of time researching.

HE married in 1831 the beautiful Natalya Goncharov. She was no wife for a poet. Her weakness was vanity, and when the imperial eye fell on her, Natalya would not be warned. Pushkin was dragged to court, and made a *Kammerjunker* at 34, along with boys of 18, so that his wife might be received into the innermost circle.

He was embarrassed for money, and longed to escape from court into the country, where he could have peace for writing. In the last year of his life he started *The Contemporary*—a famous review with which so many great names in Russian literature were to be associated—Belinsky, Nekrasov, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, Shchedrin. The shadows were closing. Pushkin's position at court became desperate. Finally, he challenged d'Anthes, a French adventurer, to a duel and was fatally wounded on January 27, 1837. He died on the 29th and was buried secretly by the Government's order. But as he had written only a few months before in *The Monument*:

"Rumour of me shall pass through the
wide Russian spaces,
And every tongue therein shall know
me by my name,
The proud son of the Slavs, the Finn,
the nomad races
Tungus and Kalmuck still untame."

Pushkin's poetry is untranslatable. This can be said of all great poetry, but it is especially true of his. The Russian language, to begin with, is precise and close-knit in a way that defies English rendering.

And Pushkin, brought up on the French of Voltaire, had an instinct for brevity which was only reinforced when he became more acquainted with the compact proverbial speech of the Russian people. In our literature we can only compare him for lucid grace and fine workmanship with Pope. But he is a Pope with a far mightier spirit that that little frame could hold. Precision and deep feeling go rarely together in any literature. Pushkin has all the hard glow of Dante, the speed and lightness of Voltaire's epigrams, the versatility of Goethe. He is capable of an immense range, and one of his most striking qualities is the power to assimilate foreign models and at the same time transform them. *The Monument*, for instance, derives from Horace; it is deeply Horatian, and yet the Latin legend is traced in Slavonic characters. So, too, scenes from *Godunov* seem to be pure Shakespeare. But they are only so on the surface. The content

is Russian, and Shakespeare provides only the ordonnance. Pushkin's most remarkable feat, perhaps, was to take a mediocre scene from John Wilson and rendering it almost word for word, somehow transmute it into a Russian classic—*The Feast in Time of Plague*. He had the rather unusual gift of being able to sympathise deeply with foreign literatures, while remaining a native poet. Almost as learned in the poetry of other nations as Milton, Pushkin could never have it said of him that "he wrote no language." He used a Russian which can be turned various ways to give different reflections. The study of his language is inexhaustible. A foreigner can only get gleams of it: one needs to have lived on the Russian soil and heard Russian speech day in and day out before one can appreciate Pushkin's verse as Turgenev did.

The range of his short poems is very wide. He wrote love lyrics, elegies, folk songs, familiar epistles, satires, epigrams, brief descriptive pieces, formal odes, and ballads. He could unburden himself in easy conversation like Byron, and near the end of his life he wrote on "Mikhailovskoe revisited" in the strain of Wordsworth. Pushkin's love poetry would be hard to rival in any language. One example will have to suffice here—the poem to Amalia Riznich, whom he had loved in Odessa. In 1830 at Boldino, meditating on her death, he wrote this poem, which Belinsky chose as "the most fragrant and pure, the holiest and most exquisite" thing that he ever composed, and which strangely enough does not appear in *The Oxford Book of Russian Verse*:

To a far homeland you departed
From this unloved and foreign place;
Still I recall how, heavy-hearted,
Long I wept before your face.
My hands grew cold that would detain
you,
Cold with the sense of what must be;
I knew such parting could but pain you,
Yet bound you with my sobs to me.

You snatched away from my caresses
Your lips, for it was hard to bear;
And from this land of dark duresses
You called me to a land more fair.
You told me: "On our day of meeting
Under a sky of lasting blue,
Olives will overshadow our greeting
When these caresses we renew."

But oh, where the wide sky for ever
Is all one dazzling dance of blue,
Where olives overshadow the river,
Sleep for the last time gathered you.
And now your beauty, your distresses
Have vanished in the funeral urn—
And with them all our hoped caresses . . .
But those I keep for you, and yearn . . .

The translation of course, fails to do justice to the original. Lines like:

Gde ten' oliv legla na vody—

Where the shadow of olives lay on the
waters,

*Tvoja hrasa, tvoyi stradan'ya
Ischezli v urne grubovoy—*

Your beauty, your sufferings
Vanished in the funeral urn,

have an organic simplicity which cannot be taken apart and reassembled in another language. Pushkin's phrasing reminds one of metal work, or some new material of the future with which architects will be able to suspend great masses on slender columns.

NOW for contrast, a poem written in the same autumn, describing the view of Boldino, the half-ruined village where Pushkin was confined by cholera quarantine while his bride-to-be waited for him:

"Look, what a scene is here: these huts,
a wretched row,
Behind them the black earth, and the
plain shelving slow,
Above them the grey clouds spread in
a muffled band.
Where are the meadows bright? Where
the dark forest-land?
Where the stream? In the yard, a low
fence running by,
Two miserable trees stand to console the
eye.

Just two trees—nothing more. And see
one of the pair
By autumn and its rains is utterly laid
bare,
The other's leaves hang soaked and
yellowing on the bough,
Waiting for Boreas, to make the pond a
slough.
Nothing more. In the yard there's not
a living dog."

The poem goes on to describe how a peasant appears with a child's coffin under his arm, and shouts to the priest's son to fetch his father for the burial. If the former poem suggests, at least in its purity of phrase, the kind of expression Gray had set for himself as his own ideal, this one, with its gloom and unshrinking realism, might have been written by "the esteemed Crabbe," as Pushkin once called him.

Pushkin's masterpiece is *Onegin*. He told Vyazemsky: "I am now writing not a novel, but a novel in verse—a devilish difference." In the 1820's prose fiction had still to establish itself in Russia, and Pushkin's novel could only have attained its sureness of style at that time in verse. He invented his own stanza, which became so much his that even the mature Lermontov, using it in *The Tambov Treasurer's Wife*, drops into Pushkin's style. *Onegin* was eight years being written, and it covers the most creative period of the poet's life. What had started as a light satire upon "the society life of a Petersburg young man at the end of 1819," grew into a moving drama of a girl's love and a man's failure to realise its worth until too late. *Onegin* is one of those Russian heroes who, in varying forms, dominated fiction until the end of the '50's.

He is Pushkin's interpretation of the "modern man," with "his embittered mind, restless in doing nothing." Tatyana, who loves him when she is still almost a child, is the very first of those Russian heroines, the fearless and wholly spontaneous women whom Turgenev and Goncharov were to depict later. She and her nurse are a reincarnation of Juliet and her nurse, but after two centuries and in a different land, they are changed and independent.

Onegin is the greatest record of Russia in the old serf-owning days, with the one exception of *War and Peace*, and perhaps if *War and Peace* is the Russian *Iliad*, here, with a disregard for historical order, we have their *Odyssey*. But there was to be no happy ending for this wanderer. *Onegin's* kingdom has been lost for ever; and the Penelope who once loved him has now given her hand away. *Onegin* has no course but to resume his wanderings, weary of the world, and even wearier of himself. In creating him, Pushkin showed unerringly the sickness of his own age and class. *Onegin*, it seems, would have become a Decembrist, or perhaps died fighting in the Caucasus. At any rate, destruction lay not far ahead of him: he was the victim of time and place, a man who saw the ideal, but lacked determination or opportunity to do anything. *Onegin* and Tatyana, in various guise, play their parts over and over again in Russian literature of the next decades.

It was Pushkin's greatest service that he revealed to his countrymen their national genius. After him, Russian writers knew instinctively how to approach their subject: the day of experiment and false beacons had gone forever. One of the most striking qualities of Russian literature has been its assurance: there is no fumbling, no hesitancy, either in the Russian novel, or in Russian poetry. Instead we find a clearness of vision, a spontaneity, an artistic poise, which first came with Pushkin.

TO-DAY in the Soviet Union his fame stands higher than it ever did. During his own lifetime the younger generation had begun to look askance at Pushkin, and although Belinsky in the '40's devoted a whole group of masterly essays to him, the generation that followed—that of Pisarev and Turgenev's Bazarov—turned away from Pushkin, in a general revolt against the culture of the aristocracy.

Twice he has been temporarily eclipsed by another poet: first by Nekrasov, and in the years immediately after the Revolution, by Mayakovsky. However, the work that Annenkov, the earliest of Pushkin scholars, began, and the great Academia edition of 1936 brought to virtual completion, has shown Pushkin in his full stature. It could be seen that when writing of village life he sometimes anticipated Nekrasov, and that many of his illegal lampoons and satires,

composed when he was the laureate of the Decembrists, would have done credit to Rosta. The great critics, of course, never lost sight of Pushkin's true worth; and the tradition which started with Belinsky of appraising him not only as the founder of Russian poetic style, but also as a faithful recorder of Russian life, came down to Soviet days, since when it has taken new strength. Pushkin is unquestionably the supreme poet of Russia, containing as he does so much of later literature in the germ. To-day he is not challenged. Belinsky had said long ago: "The time will come when he will be in Russia the *classical** poet by whose works they will form and develop not only aesthetic but also moral feeling." Now, as earlier, he is an abiding inspiration.

Englishmen have a special bond of sympathy with Pushkin. If French literature was the love of his childhood, ours was the passion of his youth and the main influence of his manhood. Byron, Shakespeare, and Scott were each dear to him, and all three he studied and assimilated for his own needs.

*Belinsky's italics-

The poet who made "The Twa Corbies" into a Russian folk-song, who wrote one of the very few Shakespearean verse-plays that have come within sight of Shakespeare, who paraphrased the core of *Measure for Measure*, and whose last letter concerns a translation from Barry Cornwall, was at home in our literature as few foreign writers have been. None surely has made such brilliant and subtle use of it. Yet the English reader to-day still knows too little about Pushkin. English scholars have not done nearly enough to illuminate the whole aspect of Pushkin's English studies. There have been one or two gifted translators of Pushkin, but we have nothing comparable, it must be owned, with the Russian versions of Shakespeare. Nor has there yet been written in English the comprehensive study of his achievement which he deserves. Inaccessible though poetry may seem in a foreign tongue, we cannot afford to neglect Pushkin. Across the miserable rifts and barriers of to-day he shows as a great European poet, whose gospel is one of freedom, respect for man, and courage. Pushkin's poetry is one of the safeguards of human brotherhood.

THREE POEMS BY PUSHKIN

(Translated by Henry Gifford)

The Monument (1836)

The monument I raise no hands have wrought for me,
The path that leads to it long will the people crowd,
Far loftier its head rears up rebelliously
Than Alexander's column proud.

Not all of me shall die—the lyre's immortal birth
Shall live beyond my dust and never meet decay—
My glory will not fade while somewhere on this earth
A single poet sees the day.

Rumour of me will pass through the wide Russian spaces,
All tongues that are therein shall know me by my name,
The proud son of the Slav, the Finn, the nomad races
Tungus, and Kalmuck still untame.

And in the people's hearts I shall be cherished long,
Because I used my lyre to rouse in them the best,
And in this iron age made liberty my song
And mercy for the fall'n I pressed.

To the command of God, O Muse, be thou resigned,
Demand no crown, and face deep wrong without dismay,
Men's praise and slander both take with a quiet mind,
And let the fool have his own way.

Bacchic Song (1825)

Why has gaiety silenced her voice?
Ring out, Bacchanalian chorus!
O long may our young wives adore us
And the maidens live on and rejoice!
So fill up your glass to the measure!
Till they chime there below
In the wine's deepest glow
Cast from you the rings that you treasure!
Come lift up our glasses and strike them in season!
Long live the Muses! And then, long live reason!
And thou, holy sun, burn away!
And even as the lamp here looks dimmer
Before the bright onset of day,
So the cunningest lies hold a faint, troubled glimmer
To that sun everlasting, the mind.
Then long live the sun, and leave darkness behind!

To Siberia (1827)

Deep in Siberian mines below
Be steadfast, with a pride unshrinking,
Nor fruitless is your work of woe,
Nor the high purpose of your thinking.

Misfortune has a sister true,
Hope, that in darkness underground
Shall lift the heart and make it sound,
The longed-for hour will come to you.

Friendship and love will find a way
To the dark confines or the cell,
As to the dungeons where you dwell
There freely comes my voice to-day.

When fallen is the heavy chain,
And prisons tumble, at the gate
Freedom in joyfulness will wait,
And brothers give your sword again.

PUSHKIN ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN THE U.S.S.R.

The list of events given here only relates to those organised nationally by the republics. Space would not avail to enumerate all the events organised in every village and city, in every institution where people work or rest.

Publications (Research)

1. Professor Boris Meilakh's new work on Pushkin and his epoch was issued in time for the June anniversary. It is based on much hitherto unpublished material found in the archives relating to V. F. Malinovsky, Director of the Lycée, attended by Pushkin.

2. Pushkin's last big work, "Istoriya Petra Pervovo" (History of Peter the First), was still in manuscript when he died. Nicholas I forbade its publication. The M.S.S., lost, and found accidentally in 1917, was first published in full by the Soviets in an Academy edition of some 300 pages.

Recent research by I. Feinberg has proved, contrary to the first estimation, that the History has much that is original and carefully thought out in his character of Peter, and in a good deal of the historical verse.

3. Professor Nechayeva has made a study of the diaries of K.S. Serbinovich—Tsarist censor from 1827 to 1830—kept in the Central State Literary Archives. These show that Serbinovich was instructed to keep a close watch on everything which Pushkin did, as well as on his friends.

TO BE ISSUED SPECIALLY FOR THE ANNIVERSARY, 1949. A total print of over 11 million copies in 252 editions was planned, of which 134 editions in nearly 10 million copies are to be in the Russian language and 106 editions in 1.3 million copies in other languages of U.S.S.R. peoples.

BY U.S.S.R. ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. A 16-volume edition of the complete works (five volumes out this year).

BY GOSLITIZDAT (State Literature Publishing House): A six-volume edition of collected works (fuller than the 1938-48 edition) in a quarter of a million copies (first two volumes out for the anniversary); a single volume edition of collected works on special thin paper; a 200,000 print of a one-volume edition, illustrated by Soviet artists. (Also illustrated short stories, lyrics, verses, and poems; a 300,000 print of "The Captain's Daughter" and "Dubrovsky" in the "Biblioteka Russkovo Romana." (Russian Novel Library). The letters will be published in a separate edition and there will be a volume entitled "Pushkin in the reminiscences of his contemporaries." The total Goslitizdat print will be three million copies.

BY ISKUSSTVO (ART) PUBLISHING HOUSE "Pushkin and the Theatre," containing Pushkin's plays, articles and letters; a new book by Professor Meilakh "Pushkin's Dramaturgy"; and Art Albums "A. S. Pushkin"; "Pushkin Places"; and 100,000 copies of the famous Kiprensky portrait.

LITERARY CRITICISM is to include a two-volume work on Pushkin's creative path by D. Blagoy; the first of a three-volume work by the late Professor M. Tsyavlovsky "Letopiissi zhizni i tvorchestva Pushkina" (Notes on the life and creative work of Pushkin); a one-volume work on Pushkin by the Institute of World Literature.

BY THE PUBLISHING HOUSES OF THE UNION REPUBLICS

Ukraine—several series of selected works.

Byelorussia—verses and short stories.

Azerbaijan—2nd, 3rd, and 4th volumes of a six-volume edition.

Armenia—a new translation of "Evgeny Onegin."

Georgia—selected works in one volume and his tales in a separate volume.

Kazakhstan—15 titles including some translated for the first time. Also one volume edition of selected works.

Between 1917 and 1947 there have been published 15 collections of his works in 200,000 copies in the Kazakh language. This is outstanding since the first translations into Kazakh were made only 60 years ago by Abai Kumanbayev and "The Captain's Daughter" actually appeared in Arabic script in Kazan in 1903.

Kirghiz Republic—a one-volume edition of selected works.

Uzbek Republic—collected works in two volumes.

Karelo-Finnish Republic—verses, "The Captain's Daughter and Dubrovsky."

One-volume editions of selected works are appearing in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Moldavia, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenia, and in the Tatar, Bashkir, Buryat- Mongol, Daghestan and Mordvinian languages.

BETWEEN 1917-1947 35.5 million copies of his works in 76 languages of U.S.S.R. peoples and foreign languages were published. Over 100 radio programmes and a cycle of special Pushkin readings have been given.

The *Bolshoi Theatre* is staging a new production of Gliere's ballet "The Bronze Horseman," the Bolshoi ballet school, a three-act ballet on Pushkin themes to music by Lyadov, Glinka, and Soviet composers.

All the Pushkinialia that the Germans destroyed including the villages of Mikhailovskaya and Trigorsskoye, have been restored.

SOVIET SPORT

A. Milne

IT is easy to arrive at an estimate of the advancement made by a nation in sport. It is equally easy to make mistakes in making such an assessment. Records made by star athletes are not a true guide. They provide exciting reading, naturally. And they must be accepted as an indication of the advancement that has been made in individual performance under the existing training systems available in the country to which the athlete belongs. But the standard or standards attained by a cross section of the population is a much more accurate picture of the result of sports education in a country.

Here are two examples to support my views.

America has produced the greatest athletes in the world in many events and in the biggest numbers. At the Olympic Games, for example, they have never been beaten in the quite unofficial points table that is compiled during each of the Games. They hold world records in many sports. The names of many of their athletes are household names throughout the world.

Yet, when military conscription was applied in wartime, it was found that a startlingly high percentage of the male population was composed of individuals medically unfit for service. Clearly, therefore, individual performances in sport have no true bearing on national health or fitness.

In the Soviet Union cultivation of physical fitness among the masses and the development of outstanding athletes are linked scientifically. The Soviet Government has long been of the opinion that the stars should rise out of mass sport. But that, in the interest of national fitness, mass sport should not be subordinate to the production of super-athletes.

One of the most amazing things in Soviet mass sport is the G.T.O. series of fitness tests. G.T.O. (Ready for labour and defence) was instituted in 1931 by the Young Communist League. Over 20 million men, women and youths have voluntarily undertaken the tests. They comprise prescribed tests in gymnastics, running, jumping, swimming, skiing, speed-skating, games, &c. These are graded according to age and sex. More than two million men and women have passed the tests since the war.

No other country encourages mass participation in sport on the grand scale seen in the U.S.S.R. More than seven million

took part in sport last year. Over 400,000 beginners participated in an All-Union "Strong Man" competition. There were 17 million starters in mass cross-country and ski runs throughout the spring and winter seasons.

Many of the leading Soviet athletes began by taking part in mass sport and taking the G.T.O. badge tests. Naturally there is a whole world of difference between G.T.O. standards and the heights attained by the record-holders. One is the breeding ground, the other the finished product.

During 1948, 20.6 thousand million roubles were spent on physical training and health protection. Some of this would be spent on the upkeep of the eleven institutes and 40 Physical Training schools already in existence, and on the three physical training and sports research institutes in Moscow, Leningrad, and Tbilisi. Some of it would go to maintain 600 sports stadiums, 15,000 mixed sports grounds, 45,000 volleyball and basketball grounds, and many thousands of swimming pools, tennis courts, and skiing stations.

The most famous athletes of the Soviet Union join with the staffs of the research institutes in conducting experiments and devising new techniques and methods of training for the 34 sports in which Soviet athletes participate. For each of these there is an All-Union championship meeting, with hundreds of qualifying competitions.

Outstanding athletes are awarded the honorary title of "Honoured Master of Sport of the U.S.S.R." The best coaches and trainers gain the coveted "Excellent in Physical Culture" badge. There are 2,461 "Honoured Masters of Sport."

Last year 193 new All-Union records were established. It has been estimated that 59 of these exceeded the existing world records. But many of them will not be accepted as the U.S.S.R. does not hold membership in all of the world controlling bodies of the 34 sports in which Soviet athletes participate. The sports in which Soviet athletes really excel are football, weight-lifting, wrestling, shooting, skiing, speed-skating, track and field athletics, boxing, swimming, and basketball.

In the 1946 European track and field athletics championships in Oslo the Soviet team won six titles, took 14 second places, and two thirds. In the European weight-lifting championships in Finland in the following year Soviet lifters took five of the six titles, and all twelve members of the team finished in the first three places. The women's world speed-skating championships of 1948 and 1949 saw the Soviet representatives finish first, second, and third on each occasion.

And we must not forget that Mikhail Botvinnik is world chess champion.

Model Constitution for a Collective Farm

(The model constitution was adopted at the 2nd All-Union Congress of Collective-farm Shockworkers, and approved by the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, February 1935. This translation, by Dudley Collard, is taken from the 1948 edition of the model constitution, issued by the State Publishing House of Political Literature, and is published by courtesy of the legal section.

I.—AIMS AND OBJECTS

THE labouring peasants of the village of in the region of voluntarily unite in an agricultural co-operative so that with communal means of production, and labour organised in common, they may create a collective, i.e., a common farm, ensure complete victory over the kulaks and all exploiters and enemies of the labouring class; and over poverty, ignorance, and the remnants of small individual farming; render their labour highly productive and thus ensure a better life for the collective farmers.

The collective farm policy, the policy of socialism, is the only correct one for labouring peasants. Members of the co-operative undertake to support it, to work conscientiously, to divide the collective income proportionately to work done, to protect socialised property, to look after the collective assets—tractors, and machines; to look after the horses, to carry out the requirements of their workers' and peasants' State, and thus to make their Collective Farm a Bolshevik one and all the Collective farmers prosperous.

II.—THE LAND

2. All existing boundary marks between members' plots are abolished, and all plots are amalgamated into one tract of land at the disposal of the Collective Farm.

Land occupied by the co-operative, like all other land in the U.S.S.R., is general State property. In accordance with the law it is granted to the co-operative in perpetuity and may not be sold or leased.

Every co-operative is granted a perpetual lease by deed from the District Council in which the area and boundaries of the land are defined. Thereafter such land may not be reduced, but it may be added to either

from unoccupied State land or from surplus land occupied by individual peasants, provided that no system of separate strips is permitted.

Each household in the Collective has the private use of a small area from the common lands by way of garden or orchard.

The size of the garden, exclusive of the area occupied by buildings, may vary from three-fifths to one and one-fifth of an acre, or in special regions to two and a-half acres, in accordance with provincial and regional conditions laid down by the Ministries of Agriculture of the Union republics on the basis of the directions of the Ministry of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R.

3. The common land cannot in any circumstances be diminished. Ex-members of the Co-operative must not be granted any share of it; they may receive land only from unoccupied State lands.

The common land is divided into fields in accordance with the accepted rotation of crops. Each tilling team is allocated a fixed sector of such fields for the whole period of rotation. In collective farms substantially engaged in raising livestock, defined sectors may, if necessary, where there is sufficient land, be set aside for growing fodder.

III.—MEANS OF PRODUCTION

4. The following are socialised:—All beasts of burden, agricultural implements (ploughs, sowers, harrows, threshers, reapers), stocks of seed, fodder required for socialised livestock, farm buildings necessary for the conduct of the co-operative's business, and all works for the manufacture of agricultural products.

The following are not socialised and remain at the personal disposition of the collective farmer's household: Dwelling houses, individual livestock and poultry, and buildings required for their accommodation, minor agricultural implements required for use in gardens. Where necessary, horses from the common stock may be hired by members for their personal requirements.

The co-operative organises a mixed stock-breeding farm, or where the number of livestock is large, separate specialised farms.

5. In districts growing grain, cotton, beet, flax, hemp, potatoes, vegetables, tea, or tobacco, every collective household may have the personal use of one cow, two calves, one sow and her litter, or, if the management thinks necessary, two sows and their litters, ten sheep or goats, an unlimited quantity of poultry and rabbits, and twenty beehives.

In arable districts where stock raising is developed, every collective household may have the personal use of two or three cows and their calves, two or three sows and their litters, twenty to twenty-five sheep or goats, an unlimited quantity of poultry and rabbits, and twenty beehives.

In districts of settled or semi-nomadic stock raising, where tillage is unimportant and stock raising plays a predominant role, every collective household may have the personal use of four or five cows and their calves, 34 sheep or goats, two or three sows and their litters, an unlimited quantity of poultry and rabbits, twenty beehives, one horse or milking mare, or two camels or two asses or two mules.

In districts of nomadic stock raising, where tillage is practically non-existent and stock raising is the universal form of economy, every collective household may have the personal use of eight to ten cows and their calves, 100 to 150 sheep or goats, an unlimited quantity of poultry, ten horses, five to eight camels.

IV.—BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

6. The co-operative undertakes to conduct its collective business according to a plan and to carry out faithfully both the agricultural production plans drawn up by the authorities and its obligations to the State. It will carry out exactly the plans for sowing, fallow land, cultivating, harvesting, threshing and ploughing, and the State plan for live-stock production.

The management and all members agree :—

- (a) to raise the fertility of the communal fields by introducing and observing a regular rotation of crops, deep ploughing, weed-killing, expansion and careful working over of fallow and arable land, timely and careful cultivation of specialised crops, timely earthing up of cotton, spreading manure both from the stock raising farm and from collective households, use of artificial fertilisers, destruction of pests, prompt and careful harvesting without waste, care and cleansing of irrigation ditches, care of forests, planting of wind-breaks, and strict observance of the agrarian rules laid down by the local authorities.
- (b) to select the best seed for sowing, to cleanse it of all impurities, to protect it carefully from theft and deterioration,

to store it in clean weather-tight buildings, to develop sorted seed sowing.

- (c) to increase the area sown by utilising all available land improving and working over waste land, ploughing up virgin soil, and by observance of the Collective farm regulations.
- (d) to make full use on a common basis of all means of locomotion, implements, agricultural equipment, seed, and other means of production belonging to the co-operative; and also of all tractors, motors, threshers, combines and other machines provided by the workers' and peasants' Government through M.T.S. to assist Collective farms; to take proper care of all communal livestock and equipment by ensuring that animals and implements are in good condition.
- (e) to organise stock-breeding farms, including where possible stud-farms, to raise the fertility and improve the breed of live-stock, to assist members conscientiously engaged in production in the use of their cattle and smaller animals, to serve with the best pedigree sires not only the communal live-stock but also the live-stock in the personal possession of members, and to observe technical zoological and veterinary rules.
- (f) to develop the production of fodder, to improve meadows and pastures, to assist members conscientiously engaged in production by allowing them where possible the use of the communal pastures, and also where possible granting them fodder against man-hours, for the live-stock in their personal possession.
- (g) to develop all other branches of agricultural productions as the natural conditions of the locality permit, as well as handicrafts in accordance with local conditions; to look after and keep clean existing ponds and construct new ones and stock them with fish.
- (h) to organise on a common basis the construction of new farm buildings and social buildings.
- (i) to raise members' qualifications and co-operate with them in training them to become team leaders, tractor drivers, combine-drivers, motor-drivers, veterinary assistants and first-aid men; groomers, swineherds, cowmen, shepherds, herdsmen, laboratory assistants.
- (j) to raise the level of members' cultural standards and introduce newspapers, books, radio and films; to set up clubs, libraries and reading rooms, to establish baths and hairdressers, to equip clean, airy camps in the fields, to maintain roads in repair and plant them with trees, especially fruit trees, and to assist members to improve and adorn their living quarters.

- (k) to encourage women to take part in collective productive and social life by bringing forward capable and experienced women collective farmers to leading positions and relieving them as far as possible from domestic work by the establishment of creches, children's playgrounds, &c.

V.—MEMBERSHIP

7. Admission of members takes place at the general meeting which approves the list of new members drawn up by the management committee.

All workers, both men and women, who have reached the age of 16 are eligible. Kulaks and persons deprived of electoral rights are ineligible.

Exceptions from this rule may be allowed :

- (a) for those children of disfranchised persons who over a period of years have been conscientiously engaged in socially useful work.
- (b) for those former kulaks and members of their families, who, having been banished for their anti-Soviet and anti-collective farm activity, have in their new settlements proved, by three years' conscientious work and support of the measures of the Soviet power, that they have reformed.

Individual farmers who have sold their horses within two years before joining the co-operative and have no seed are admitted to membership on condition that they pay in kind from their income, within six years, the value of the horses and the seed.

8. Expulsion from the co-operative requires a resolution of members at a general meeting at which not less than two-thirds of the members are present. The minutes must record the number of members present and the number voting for expulsion. Where a member appeals against his expulsion to the District Council, such appeal is finally determined by the presidium thereof in the presence of the chairman of the co-operative and the appellant.

VI.—FINANCE

9. New members pay an entrance fee of from 30 to 40 roubles in accordance with the extent of their holding. Entrance fees are paid into the co-operative non-distributable fund.

10. One quarter to one half of the value of members' socialised property (beasts of burden, implements, farm buildings, &c.) is credited to the non-distributable fund, the larger proportion applying to the larger farms. The remainder is credited to the members' deposit share.

When a member leaves a co-operative, the management committee draws up an account and returns him his deposit share in cash, and thereupon he may be assigned a plot of land, but only a plot outside the area of the Collective. The account is normally taken to the end of the accounting year.

11. The co-operative deals with the crops and livestock it raises as follows :—

- (a) It performs its obligations to the State by supplying and repaying advances of seed, settles in kind with Motor Tractor Station for their work according to contract, and carries out agreements with sub-contractors.
- (b) It sets aside seed and fodder for the whole year's requirements, and to ensure against drought and famine creates a reserve stock of seed and fodder, annually renewed, representing 10 to 15 per cent. of a year's requirements.
- (c) By resolution of a general meeting it creates a fund not exceeding 2 per cent. of gross production to assist the disabled, the aged, the temporarily incapacitated, and needy families of Red Army men, and to maintain children's creches and orphanages.
- (d) It divides in proportions determined by a general meeting the parts of the produce to be sold to the State or on the market.
- (e) It distributes the balance to members according to man-hours worked.

12. The Co-operative applies its cash income as follows :—

- (a) It pays the State taxes fixed by law, and the insurance premiums, and repays cash advances as a first call.
- (b) It meets current production expenses, such as running repairs to agricultural implements, veterinary service to cattle, extermination of pests, &c.
- (c) It meets administrative expenses, not exceeding 2 per cent. of the cash income.
- (d) It puts aside money for cultural needs, such as training, organisation of creches and children's playgrounds, installation of radio, &c.
- (e) It supplements the non-distributable fund for the purchase of agricultural implements, live-stock and building materials, and the payment of outside building labour. This contribution in corn-growing districts should be 12 to 15 per cent. of the cash income, and in districts raising specialised crops or livestock, 15 to 20 per cent.
- (f) It distributes the balance to members according to man-hours worked.

Every receipt must be recorded on the day of receipt.

The management will prepare an annual budget of receipts and expenditure to be approved by the general meeting. Expenditure must be for the items envisaged by the budget, and money spent on one item cannot be set off against money saved on another without the authority of the general meeting.

Only 70 per cent. of the estimated expenditure may be incurred before the prospects for the harvest are finally ascertained. The balance is a reserve to be spent only thereafter and on the authority of a general meeting.

The co-operative keeps its spare cash on current account at the bank or savings bank. Withdrawals from current account must be authorised by the management committee, and the signatures of the chairman and accountant are required.

VII.—ORGANISATION, SALARIES, AND WORKING DISCIPLINE

13. All work on the farm is performed by the personal labour of members in accordance with regulations adopted by the general meeting. The hiring of outside agricultural labour is permitted only in the case of experts (agronomists, engineers, technicians, and so on).

The hiring of temporary labour is permitted only in exceptional cases, when work cannot be performed to time by the full employment of all the co-operative resources, or for building labour.

14. Production teams are formed by the management committee from members.

Tilling teams are formed for the whole period of crop rotation, and work on the same sector during that period. The management committee assigns to each tilling team by special deed the necessary implements, draft animals, and farm buildings.

Stock-raising teams are formed for not less than three years. The management committee assigns to each stock-raising team by special deed its breeding stock, necessary equipment and farm buildings.

Work is assigned to members direct by the team leader, who must make the best use of each of his members, without partiality or nepotism, carefully assessing the training, experience and physical strength of each, and, in the case of pregnant or nursing mothers, bearing in mind the necessity for lightening their work and releasing them from work one month before and one month after confinement, setting aside for their maintenance during these two months one half of their average earnings.

15. Farm work is on a piece-work basis.

Standards of work and the evaluation of work in man-hours are worked out for all types of work by the management committee and confirmed by the general meeting.

The standards are those attainable by a conscientious worker, taking into account the condition of the draught animals, the machines and the soil. Every type of work, e.g., ploughing an acre, sowing an acre, earthing up an acre of cotton, threshing a ton of grain, digging a hundredweight of beet, stripping an acre of flax, retting an acre of flax, milking a gallon of milk, and so on, is evaluated in man-hours according to the training required by the worker, the complexity and difficulty of the work and its importance to the farm.

The team leader reckons up the work of each member at least once a week, and enters in the member's book the number of man-

hours to be credited. The management exhibits a monthly list of the man-hours credited to each member. The annual results of the work and the income of each member, except the accountant, must be checked by the chairman and the team leader.

Information on the number of man-hours worked by each member is displayed for general information at least two weeks before the general meeting which approves the distribution of income.

If a tilling team by good work raises a harvest on its sector above the farm average, or a stock-raising brigade by better work achieves a greater yield of milk, fatter stock, or the rearing of every calf, the management may pay each member 10 per cent. extra on his man-hours, outstanding stock workers 15 per cent., and the team leader or supervisor of the stock farm 20 per cent.

If a tilling team by bad work produces a harvest below the farm average, or a stock-raising team by bad work produces a milk yield below average, or leaner stock, or rears fewer calves, then the assessment of man-hours for each member of the team may be reduced by 10 per cent.

The distribution of income to members is exclusively on the basis of man-hours worked by each member.

16. A cash advance may be made to a member in the course of the year up to one half of the amount due to him for his work. The management committee may make an advance in kind to members after threshing has commenced from the 10 to 15 per cent. of threshed corn set aside for the internal requirements of the Co-operative. In a Co-operative growing specialised crops, a cash advance is made to members before the completion of deliveries to the State of the cotton, flax, hemp, beet, tea, tobacco, &c., in proportion to the deliveries effected, at least once a week, of 60 per cent. of the moneys received for such deliveries.

17. All members agree to take the greatest care of their collective property and State machines used on the farm, to work conscientiously, to conform with the constitution and the directions of the general meeting and the management committee, to observe internal regulations, to carry out exactly the work given them by the management committee and the team leaders, also their social duties, and strictly to observe working discipline.

Internal regulations may empower the management committee to impose a penalty for a wasteful or careless attitude to collective property, for failure to turn out for work without good reason, for bad work, and for other breaches of working discipline and the constitution. Examples are: a reprimand; a censure in the general meeting; posting up on the notice board; a fine of up to five days' man-hours; transfer to inferior work; a temporary exclusion from work.

Where all educative and punitive measures taken have proved useless, the management committee may propose to a general meeting the expulsion of an incorrigible member, whereupon the procedure laid down in article 8 hereof shall be followed.

18. Theft of collective or State property, or sabotage of the collective property, or cattle, or M.T.S. machines, shall be regarded as a treason to the social aims of the Collective Farms and assistance to the enemies of the people. Persons guilty of such a criminal subversion of the basis of collective farms shall be prosecuted by the Collective with all the rigour of the law of the Workers' and Peasants' State.

VIII.—MANAGEMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE'S AFFAIRS

19. The affairs of the Co-operative are directed by the general meeting of members, and between meetings by the management committee elected at a general meeting.

20. The general meeting is the supreme authority.

- (a) It elects a chairman and the management committee and a committee of auditors to be approved by the District Council.
- (b) It admits and expels members.
- (c) It confirms the annual production plan, the budget of receipts and expenditure, the construction programme, the standards of work and the evaluation of work in man-hours.
- (d) It confirms contracts with the Machine and Tractor Station.
- (e) It adopts the annual report of the management committee, which must be audited and also reports by the management committee on important agricultural campaigns.
- (f) It confirms the amounts for the different funds and the quantity of produce and cash payable per man-hour.
- (g) It confirms internal regulations.

In all the foregoing points the decisions of the management committee are not valid until confirmed by general meeting.

A quorum is half the membership for all matters, except for the election of the management committee and chairman, the expulsion of members, and fixing the amounts of different funds, for which it is two-thirds.

A resolution is carried by a majority on a show of hands.

21. The management committee, of from five to nine members according to the size of the co-operative, is elected for two years. It is the executive organ, and is responsible to the general meeting for the work of the

Co-operative and the fulfilment of its obligations to the State.

22. The chairman is elected by the general meeting for the day-to-day direction of the co-operative's work and its teams and for supervision of fulfilment of the management committee's decisions. He is also chairman of the management committee.

He must summon the management committee at least twice a month to review current affairs and take the necessary decisions.

On the chairman's nomination the management committee elects a deputy chairman from among its members. The deputy chairman is in all matters subordinate to the chairman.

23. Team leaders and supervisors of stock farms are appointed by the management committee for not less than two years.

24. An accountant to keep accounts and value stock is chosen from the members or hired from outside. He keeps accounts and valuations on the prescribed forms and is wholly subordinate to the management committee and the chairman.

He has no rights personally, to deal with the co-operative's finances, to make loans or dispose of the resources in kind. Such rights belong only to the chairman and the management committee. All expenditure must be vouched for not only by the accountant but also by the chairman or deputy chairman.

25. The committee of auditors checks all the co-operative's financial dealings and whether receipts in cash and kind have been credited in the prescribed manner, whether the distribution of assets has been in accordance with the provisions of this constitution, whether sufficient care is being taken of property, whether there has been any theft or waste of property or money, and how the co-operative is performing its obligations to the State, paying its debts and recovering debts due to it.

It also carefully checks all accounts between the co-operative and its members, calls attention to every slip, incorrect calculation of man-hours, delay in settlement for man-hours, and other infringements of the rights of the co-operative or its members. It conducts an audit four times a year. The auditors' observations are attached to the annual report before the general meeting, and read out immediately after the report. The audit is adopted by the general meeting. The committee of auditors is accountable for its work to the general meeting.

IN DEFENCE OF CULTURE

By Ilya Ehrenburg

We give this article, translated and slightly abridged, from the Soviet Journal "Bolshevik" (No. 2, 1949), as an interesting example of how western writers are interpreted to the Soviet reading public by a Soviet writer, and as bearing on Louis Golding's replies to questions on Ehrenburg's Wroclaw speech.

WHEN, a hundred years ago, the words of the "Communist Manifesto" rang out, followed by the rifle shots of the insurgent Parisian labourers, many men of art and science in the West said that the people who called themselves Communists meant to destroy the foundations of human civilisation. Naturally, there were progressive men of culture in those days too, who sympathised with the working people's desire for emancipation: but the greater majority of the philosophers and scholars, artists and poets, were either hostile or indifferent to the first attempts of the working people to free themselves from the yoke of money. These scholars and writers were by no means delighted with the state of the world in which they lived; they were aware of the depreciation of human values, the unbridled egoism of the ruling class, the growth of contradictions; in their books they frankly laid the ulcers of society bare. But they did not know how to resolve the antagonism between the sweat of the people and the stock exchange bulletins, and they hated the people who called for social revolution.

This duality was especially striking in the days of the Paris Commune, when the greatest French writers, who exposed the bourgeoisie in their books, hastened to censure the insurgent workers.

A certain moral code was established, enjoining abstention from politics upon science. Scientists who by their work helped to prop up bourgeois society consoled themselves with the myth that culture stood above classes. Such illusions could, naturally, be more easily cherished by the mathematician or the physicist than by the novelist; nevertheless, the legend of the "ivory tower" which supposedly sheltered poets from social storms was current in the world of art, too.

It must frankly be said that those who took refuge in this "tower" were by no means the best representatives of the arts. The so-called "poètes damnés" of France (who subsequently gave rise to the symbolists) were tormented by the vileness and loathsomeness of the life around them; their poetry gave voice to horror, impotent rebellion, human anguish; they had no idea where to look for salvation, but some of them at least instinctively turned towards the forces of revolution. Such was the case with Baudelaire in 1848, and with Rimbaud at the time of the Paris commune. The representatives of the literary trend called "naturalism" were like physicians who diagnose a disease without knowing how to treat it; Flaubert did not understand the ideas of socialism; indeed, he even condemned them; but at the same time he stigmatised the ruling class; Zola went no further than to cherish vague liberal illusions, but in his novels he conscientiously pictured the degeneration of the bourgeoisie. The same may be said of all the great writers and artists of the West. Some of them, like Heine, Daumier, Whitman, Courbet, were progressive men of their day; they tried to find a path to the world of the working people. Others (and these were the majority) washed their hands of what they called "politics," but, being genuine artists, truthfully portrayed the doomed state of society with which they were linked by thousands of threads.

The voice of Herzen, the novels of Tolstoy, Turgenev's "Notes of a Hunter," later the books of Chekhov and Gorky, and, finally, the stories about the self-sacrifices of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia which so fired imaginations in the West, likewise widened the breach between art and the bourgeois "order." One may name writers and artists of the most diverse trends—Ibsen and Anatole France, Manet and Rodin, Shaw and Hauptmann—whose works reveal alarm and indignation, and sometimes despair. This was not philosophical pessimism, but indignation at what was going on around them and the inability to find any way out. Their honesty, their conscience, did not allow them to find a solution in the happy endings of Dickens, who lived in a different age, or to feel satisfied with that tranquil state of the

world typical of Corot, an artist who attained maturity in the first half of the 19th century.

The era of self-imposed ostracism, of everlasting quests and despairing hopes lasted right up to the October Revolution. The years preceding World War I were marked by the tragic sterility of the bourgeois intelligentsia: consummate skill and extraordinary refinement of sensibility could not conceal spiritual vacuity. Marcel Proust gasped for breath in his cork-walled room. The social plays of his youth forgotten, the half-mad Strindberg swung back and forth between the cardboard cliffs of Nietzsche's philosophy, and the slippers of the Pope. Maeterlinck amused himself sometimes with mysticism, sometimes with mystification. Even the horrible slaughter on the fields of Champagne and Poland, even the hecatombs of Verdun, failed to open the eyes of the writers, scientists, and artists. It required the refreshing storm of the October Revolution to compel the finest representatives of art and science in the West to look at life with new eyes and to understand the responsibility they themselves bore to history.

Two French writers, utterly unlike each other, but both well known far beyond the confines of their own country—Anatole France and Romain Rolland—were among the first men in the West to welcome the new era of mankind. In the reports coming from Russia, Anatole France saw, above all else, the triumph of reason, light piercing the long twilight in which he had been fated to live his life. Before his death this Olympian, reputed an incorrigible sceptic, greeted the new day of mankind with deep trust. Romain Rolland, the scribe of the musical world, the bright moralist and cloudy thinker, had a difficult road to travel, the road from abstract humanism to the struggle of the people; but he succeeded. To these two names would be added a third—that of the passionate, irreconcilable Henri Barbusse, who found in the idea of Communism the solution to all the contradictions which troubled him.

By their work, Anatole France and Romain Rolland must be counted as belonging to the era preceding World War I. There followed a new era which lasted twenty years, but left few important works of art behind it; this was the protracted denouement of the historical tragedy. From the creation of material wealth capitalism turned to its destruction: plants were torn down, pedigreed cattle were turned into fertiliser, ship loads of coffee were burned, wheat was destroyed before the eyes of hungry people. The intellectuals of Western Europe were subjected to spiritual mechanisation. Dadaism and surrealism were naive attempts to pit infantile mischievousness against the despotism of capital which was turning men into robots. The faint-hearted grasped at Freudism in the hope of finding refuge from consciousness in the world of the subconscious. The social struggle grew sharper everywhere; now even the near-sighted could not miss it. The word "Soviets" per-

sisted in the newspaper columns. The writers and artists of the West heard of some of the achievements of Soviet art—the poetry of Mayakovsky, various theatrical productions, the films "Battleship Potemkin" and "Mother." In various countries men of culture began to turn to the East, some with conviction, others irresolutely; among them were Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells, Upton Sinclair and Heinrich Mann.

In Berlin the Fascists came to power, and the glow of the bonfires at which they burned books was reflected on the countenance of old Europe in a blush of shame. The voice of Maxim Gorky rang out: he called upon the masters of culture to unite with the millions of common people and defend the great treasures of mankind. In 1935—in Paris, and in 1937—in Fascist-beseiged Madrid, international congresses devoted to the defence of culture, met.

It was in these years, in the years of the "brown plague" that Antonio Machado, Louis Aragon, Jean-Richard Bloch and Anna Seghers found their places. The Catholic writer José Bergamin found a common language with the Communists. I remember two grey-haired writers in besieged Madrid—the Dane, Martin Andersen Nexø and the Frenchman, Julien Benda; recently we saw them again in Wrocław—in their eighties, and still young in spirit. The German writer Ludwig Renn and the British writer Ralph Fox fought in Spain. The tragedy of Spain contributed greatly to the change of attitude of one of the most famous artists of the West—Pablo Picasso, who opposed the Fascists and subsequently joined the Communists.

IN the autumn of 1939, when reactionary forces were hounding the Communists and slandering the Soviet Union, Pablo Neruda, the remarkable poet of Latin America, joined the Communist Party. "I am filled with anger," he wrote, "when I see a young Aztec or Argentinian or Cuban moping about Kafka, Rilke, and Lawrence. Serene young men, driven old before their time by their worries about 'pure poetry,' they forget the simplest human duty. It is not fitting in our day to seek the grains of the past or investigate the bypaths of dreams; life and the struggle of the people have grown to such proportions that only in our era, in our struggle, are the springs of art to be found."

The Fascist invasion drew a line between the creators of culture and its idlers. The French Communists may be proud of the fact that the greatest scientists of the age—Paul Langevin and Joliot-Curie—fought courageously in their ranks. The martyrology of the heroes of Czechoslovakia include the names of such splendid writers as Vancura and Fucik. The poets Aragon

and Paul Eluard, the Catholic writer Martin-Chauffier, the novelist Andre Chamson, and many others took part in the French Resistance. The old artist Albert Marquet became a Communist. The heroic struggle of the Soviet people against the Fascist invaders fired the best writers, actors, and artists of the West to come out against the reactionary circles of America and Great Britain. The British biologist Haldane and the French biologist Marcel Prenant are with the Communists. In 1945 the famous American writer Theodore Dreiser requested William Foster, President of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., to admit him to membership of the Party.

The wounds inflicted upon European culture by the Fascists are indescribable: monuments of antiquity destroyed, museums and libraries burned down, the death of representatives of art and science, and finally, growing savagery, bred by years of doing without enlightenment, without morals, without schooling. And yet, for all this, these years did bring something positive: they put an end to the long twilight: they divided light from darkness. Having plunged men of intellectual activity into the depths of despair, they also engendered in the minds of the best of them a hope which all the watchdogs of the night are now powerless to destroy.

The victory over Fascism was clouded by the growing ferocity of the forces of reaction which tried, and are still trying, to misrepresent the significance of this victory and make it meaningless. True, in the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe reaction has been crushed; there culture has become the property, the vital concern of the popular masses. But in France and in Italy, where after their liberation, a blossoming of cultural activity was to be observed, where in 1945 and 1946 many new books and journals appeared, interesting exhibitions were arranged, and good films produced, a change soon took place: a crisis in literature began, the cinema was crushed by the Americans; political and social reaction are threatening the very existence of national culture. In America ignorant men, maddened with fear, have launched a crusade against every manifestation of free thought and free creative work. To cap all this, propaganda in favour of a third world war is creating alarm and uncertainty in the countries of the West.

One would think that under such conditions no one could be neutral. Yet there are many prominent writers in America, to say nothing of scientists, whose behaviour brings to mind the West-European intellectuals of the early years of our century. When a French writer turns away from the social struggle or tries to use the same yardstick to measure the heroism of the franc-tireurs and the profits of the "collaborators," we know that his blindness is assumed, his impartiality partial. It is a different thing in America. . . . I shall try, by citing the example of two writers—the American William Faulkner and the French Jean-

Paul Sartre—to show the difference in the degree of responsibility they each bear.

Faulkner is a gifted and half-blind writer who confuses humanism with racialism, who is carried away by the false romanticism of the slave-holding South and who has, in that same South, come to know the deepest despair. He has spent all his life in a small town in the most ignorant and most brutal of all the 48 States. The great events of the century passed him by; he describes a stifling black world, the hell in his Southland and in his heart. He may be blamed for being only Faulkner, for the fact that having found himself in jail, he did not try to smash the bars, but made a careful study, instead, of the mould on the walls, the ways of the jail-keepers, the sufferings of the prisoners. In my eyes, however, Faulkner is not the defendant, but a witness for the defence at the historic trial at which the new world is judging the world of self-interest, falsehood, and hatred. Faulkner's books show not only what the planters of Mississippi do with their black slaves, but also what modern America does with its white writers. Faulkner's despair is not the result of a literary fashion, but of the environment in which he lives; his pessimism is more honest than the semi-official, semi-animal optimism of those American literary men who acclaim the dollar god with a smile that seems borrowed from an advertisement for tooth paste.

IT is impossible to consider Sartre on the same plane with Faulkner. The instinctive, observant (despite his blindness), extremely sensitive Faulkner seems to me to be a much greater artist than the trenchant, rational Sartre of the literary salons. But that is not all: the main point is that France is not the United States. Should any Parisian worker find himself in the small town of Oxford, where Faulkner has been living all his life, he would feel as though he had been flung back into the Middle Ages. Sartre has lived through the remarkable epic of the French Resistance Movement. This does not mitigate his guilt: it magnifies it.

Sartre has repeatedly asserted that he does not want to side with either the Communists or the anti-Communists, with either America or the Soviet Union; he suggested organising a "third force" on the spiritual plane, as Messrs. Ramadier and Moch proposed doing on the political plane. There is, however, a certain inevitable relation between behaviour and events. In 1946 Sartre began to attack the Communists for "cramping the freedom of the writer." Two years later the members of the famous Un-American Activities Committee in New York applauded his play.

"Les Mains Sales" (Sartre's latest play) is a trivial lampoon. Everything in it is false and implausible; in Sartre's opinion the Communists in the underground lived very like his customary heroes—habitués of bars with literary pretensions, and practisers of eccentric forms of love. The Communists are busy killing each other. One Communist is a prisoner in a Fascist concentration camp; wishing to kill him, his comrades send him poisoned liqueur chocolates. Some concentration camp, and some Communists! But best of all is the liqueur chocolate in South-Eastern Europe in 1943! . . . This play was written and staged at the time when the reactionary Government in France began its ruthless persecution of the Communists. Sartre is fond of talking about "freedom of choice." One can imagine Moch's gendarmes shooting down striking miners, with a bystander also shooting at the strikers and cleverly remarking: "Please do not confuse us: they shoot because they have orders to, while I shoot because I have freedom of choice."

With Sartre's permission the Americans changed the name of his play. In New York it is called "Red Gloves"—the calumniators across the Atlantic can't get along without the epithet "red." Perhaps Sartre will change the title in France, too—one does not mention ropes in the home of a hanged man, and it is hardly the thing for the author of a lampooning play to raise the question of clean hands. . . .

I have dwelt on the case of Sartre in order to stress how necessary it is for every writer in Western Europe to determine his place. I believe that those writers, who now, in 1949, declare their alliance with the cause of the common people, bear no resemblance to the "visitors" of the 'twenties and 'thirties: butterflies won't venture to flutter amidst M. Moch's bullets, and the pirouettes of André Gide are not to be imitated in our severe days. The myth of a "third force" has been dispelled. The literary newspaper "Figaro-Littéraire" to which writers supposedly defending the "neutrality" of art contribute, gives much more space to the memoirs of Hitler generals and to slanderous stories about Soviet economy than to problems of French literature. Thus, the epigoni of "pure art" do not conceal their political essence. Recently one of them, Maurice Clavel, declared: "I defend the right of writers and artists to be politically neutral, sceptical, indifferent, even cowardly." It was not in an "ivory tower" that Maurice Clavel gave utterance to this, but at a meeting of the political party "Reunion du Peuple Français," headed by General De Gaulle. Well, neutrality, scepticism, indifference, even cowardice, in writers and artists quite satisfy those who want to muzzle the nation that has known four revolutions.

There is still a great deal of fog in America. I know that a Howard Fast or an Albert Maltz won't lose his way. But I am thinking now of those great masters who are still wandering about in the world, now catching sight of the forest edge, now losing them-

selves again in the thicket, emerging from a hell akin to Faulkner's to speak a fleeting word of hope and at once sinking back to hell. When I say this I have in mind Hemingway, Steinbeck, Caldwell. I am carefully following their creative path, a path that loops in and out and is often puzzling. I know that they have lost not only their way, but even themselves, more than once: yet I see how the conscience of these artists protects them from accepting the America which is now eager to swallow the world. It is customary to reproach these writers with pessimism. Mrs. Rogers, an expert on the "Un-American Activities Committee" declared that in so far as a work of art contains "despair and hopelessness," it represents a "Communist danger." It goes without saying, that the books of Hemingway and Faulkner, Steinbeck and Caldwell, are extremely far from Communism, but I quite understand Mrs. Rogers' indignation: any book by an honest artist depicting a terrible life, brutality, and hopelessness is an indictment of modern America.

Fogs cannot conceal the most important thing from us: in 1939 the scientists, writers, and artists of the West were still at the cross-roads; to-day almost all of them have chosen their places. A severe struggle is going on between life and death; thought cannot remain neutral, conscience cannot be indifferent.

The Congress of Men of Culture which met in the Polish city of Wroclaw last summer demonstrated that the finest representatives of our time, not content with meaningful sighs and vague day-dreams, have decided to fight for peace, for freedom, for human dignity. Thought has passed over from the defensive to the offensive.

The Congress stressed the accord between the Communists and all the progressive minds of the epoch. Our ill-wishers like to detect "narrowness" and "sectarianism"; in reality they ruthlessly persecute every manifestation of sympathy towards Communism. Yet, at Wroclaw, Abbé Boulier (Professor at a Catholic University), Hewlett Johnson (Dean of Canterbury), the liberal writers Vercors and Bedel, the essayist Benda, who has many points of differences with Marxism, and many others, worked side by side with the Communists. The idea of the United Front, born in Western Europe fifteen years ago, is still alive; but after the stern experience of Fascist occupation and the Resistance, this idea has found a new form of expression.

The Soviet Union plays a great role in protecting and prolonging the life of the culture of all mankind, while in the capitalist countries thought is being trampled, creative work is perishing. Soviet scientists and writers, protecting the great traditions of the past, keeping international solidarity firmly in mind, are creating cultural treasures. The very existence of our state, its strength and its spiritual growth, are helping men of culture all over the world in their struggle against the fury and ignorance of the epigoni of imperialism.

I do not think that the content and form of works of art can be alike in different countries in our day. Content changes with different social conditions, and form, as everyone knows, is dictated by content. The theme of the pathos of labour in Poland or in Bulgaria will express the joy of building a new society; the same theme in Detroit may sound like Ford propaganda. Writers who attack the hypocritical morality of the French bourgeoisie are performing their duty; they are, above all else, honest artists; they cannot employ the artistic methods suitable for affirmation. This explains the aesthetic "diversity" of the writers and artists of the West who have linked their fate with the great idea of Communism. Theme and form cannot be identical among the artists or writers of Poland, where the People's Democracy has begun to transform society; of France, where the class struggle has grown sharply aggravated; and of Oxford, in the State of Mississippi.

Scientists who desire the true triumph of reason, who loathe superstition, dictatorial laws and oligarchy which permit only

the few to acquire knowledge, are turning away from the worshippers of the dollar, from the racialists and Jesuits. Seeing how the degeneration of man in bourgeois society is leading to the degeneration of art, writers and artists are becoming adherents of the new social system. At the sight of the preparations for a bloody new war which means deadly danger to the culture of mankind, true intellectuals, indignant, are exposing the new pretenders to world supremacy.

"How strange that only Vallés is with me," said Courbet at a meeting of the Paris Commune. Many years have passed since then: the banner which waved over one city for a few months now floats high over a big and advanced country of the world; under this banner the struggle of the peoples for their emancipation is growing. To-day the men of culture are not with the continuers of the bloody deeds of the champions of Versailles; and, when we think of our allies in this severe struggle we are waging for the happiness of mankind, we know: reason is with us.

Notes on the Current Cultural Controversies in the U.S.S.R.

SINCE 1946, controversy in the field of culture has filled many columns in the newspapers and journals of the specialised and general Press in the Soviet Union. Several articles by one writer, or a single article by another, have launched widely-discussed controversies in which the lay, but interested public, has participated to a large degree. Several such controversies have been summed up by a resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, condemning one or another trend in the particular cultural field, criticising individuals and organisations, however famed or highly placed, and suggesting lines along which workers in the particular cultural field should broadly develop to serve the Soviet people's cultural needs at this stage in the history and development of the U.S.S.R.

Such resolutions, in several cases, have been followed either by plenary sessions of the administrative organ of the cultural Union in the work of which the particular writers, dramatists, script writers, or musicians participated, or, as in the case of the composers, by an All-Union Conference (April 1948.)

Most of these conferences and sessions have lasted from five to ten days. The discussion, which has raged fast and sometimes furious, with no words minced or personalities spared, has taken up the greater part of each conference. The specialised Press has reported such sessions and conferences, sometimes verbatim and always in considerable detail.

During December, 1948, the Boards of the Union of Soviet Writers and of the Union of Soviet Composers met in plenary session. In January, 1949, the U.S.S.R. Academy of Arts met also, after nine months of discussion in the Press.

The Union of Soviet Writers, meeting in plenary session in Moscow from December 15-20, had to survey some two-and-a-half years of work since the original Central Committee resolution of August, 1946. Reports at the December session were made

by A. Siras and K. Simonov on Armenian literature; by I. Muizhniek and A. Surkov on Latvian literature, and by S. Mukanov and B. Gorbатов on Kazakh literature. All six speakers devoted the greater part of their reports to *dramaturgy* in the respective Republics, its shortcomings and methods of overcoming them.

A report was made by A. Sofronov on Soviet drama since the August, 1946, resolution. He criticised superficial treatment of important themes by some dramatists and felt that the shortage of good Soviet plays in the repertoire of most theatres showed the lack of seriousness with which writers regarded writing for the stage.

Other speakers in this discussion included, A. Korneichuk, the Ukrainian playwright, P. Lebedev, chairman of the Committee for Art Affairs under the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers, and A. Fadeyev.

The criticism of the theatrical atmosphere led to an article in "Pravda," on January 28, 1949, in which a particular group of theatrical critics were severely criticised for their unsympathetic treatment of plays on contemporary Soviet themes.

Among other speakers during the discussion were I. Bolshakov, U.S.S.R. Minister of Cinematography, and V. Scherbina, Deputy-Minister.

I. Bolshakov felt that nine-tenths of the success or failure of a film depended on the scenario. He drew attention to the development of a new genre in Soviet films—feature documentary. Close collaboration between director and script writer, always very necessary, had now been established on a firmer footing, with the director usually acting not as co-author but rather as consultant to the script-writer. In a number of cases such co-operation had been fruitful.

In his opinion Soviet films needed extending and developing, not in scale and quantity but depth. He hoped that the U.S.W. would consider script writing a serious matter in the future. Discussion followed this speech, and that by V. Scherbina and it was recorded that it had been the first time that script-writing had been discussed at a plenary session of the Union.

The plenary session of the Board of the Union of Soviet Composers met from December 21-30, 1948, and devoted its time, in the main, to listening to new works written since the Central Committee's resolution of February 10th, 1948, condemning V. Muradeli's opera "The Great Friendship."

The works heard ranged from popular songs to symphonic works, cantatas, and oratorios. Selections from all branches of music in all the Soviet Republics had been made prior to the conference by the different sections of the Union.

The works of over 100 composers were heard in 15 concerts, which included 30 major works. Among these numerous compositions, singled out for special mention were:—new works by the young Armenian, A. Aratyunyan, works by several Azerbaijan composers, a new "Youth" Violin Concerto by D. Kabalevsky, a sinfonietta by the young Muscovite composer, S. Weinberg, and songs and a suite by Lev Knipper.

An article by Tikhon Khrennikov, General Secretary of the U.S.C., in "Pravda," (January 4, 1949), summed up the considerable improvements to be noted as a whole in Soviet music since February, 1948, and also drew attention to S. Prokofiev's failure, in his new opera "A Tale About a Real Man," to understand the nature of the formalist mistakes he had been accused of making in February, 1948, since he had repeated them again within nine months.

The third session of the general meeting of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Arts opened on January 24, 1949. Among the main speakers were corresponding members of the Arts Academy, P. Sysoyev and A. Lebedev.

Sysoyev dwelt mainly on the general struggle between the formalist and naturalist schools on the one hand against Socialists realism in graphic art on the other. The speech made by A. Lebedev drew attention to much subjective and incomplete art criticism, while, on the other hand, some critics went into unbridled ecstasies over average and often bad painting. Both such methods displayed extremely poor understanding of the role of criticism in the theory and practice of painting.

TARTU STATE UNIVERSITY ON THE ROAD TO PROGRESS

TRANSLATED FROM THE ESTONIAN

This article was received from the faculty of Tartu University in reply to the article in the Times Educational Supplement of April 3rd, 1948, entitled "Tartu under the Russians, Death of a University." The information given below shows that in fact there never was so much educational activity in Tartu University as to-day under the Soviet regime.

THE establishment of Soviet power in Estonia in June, 1940, not only liberated the creative forces of the Estonian people from a yoke which, in various forms, had lasted for centuries, but also launched the country on a broad road of cultural and economic development. Socialist construction in Estonia is still young. The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic has been in existence for only eight years, three of which were taken up by the Nazi occupation. But the working people of Estonia may well be proud of the impressive advances they have already made in the free brotherhood of Soviet nations. The national economy of the Estonian S.S.R. is pushing ahead by leaps and bounds, and the culture of the Estonian people, national in form and socialist in content, is growing steadily broader and deeper.

Mighty achievements, such as the people could only dream of in the days of the old capitalist regime, have now become matters of everyday, real experience—thanks to the fact that the exploitation of man by man has been abolished in Estonia; also, that the toiling masses of the whole people have plunged heart and soul into the great work of socialist construction. Thanks, too, to the fact that the development of the country is taking place under the steered, experienced leadership of the Bolshevik Party, and to the friendly assistance afforded us by our brother Soviet peoples.

In the autumn of 1940, after the establishment of Soviet power in Estonia, Tartu State University entered on an entirely new stage of development. The gates of the University were opened to the children of working people from factory, farm, office, and school—children who, in the conditions of the old capitalist order, had been excluded from the privilege of enjoying higher education. The overwhelming majority of the

teaching staff welcomed with enthusiasm the opportunity of disseminating the new, creative doctrines of Soviet science, placing all their knowledge, all their talent, at the service of social freedom and progress. This work, however, which began so promisingly, was cut short by the treacherous invasion of the marauding Nazi hordes. Many members of the University—students and lecturers alike—joined the ranks of the Soviet army, taking up arms in defence of the Soviet power and of all it stands for, and contributing their share to the achievement of victory over the Fascist aggressor. Many others evacuated to the Soviet rear, where they continued to study and teach.

The Nazi invaders, who had set themselves the aim of destroying the University, did not shrink from the most outrageous acts of vandalism. They ruined a number of University buildings, pillaged the laboratories, and carried off the scientific apparatus they found there, together with everything of value that they could lay their hands on, including platinum objects and the radium supplies of the University clinics. They wrecked the famous Observatory of the University and plundered the valuable seismographs of the seismological station. They attempted to ship to Germany the most precious possessions of the University Library, although in this they were only partially successful. They savagely murdered several members of the teaching staff (including Professors Kliiman and Ruubel, Senior Lecturer Looring and Assistant Senior Research Student Lang). They arrested many others and threw them into concentration camps. By propaganda and terrorism they forced a large number of university workers to abandon their homeland for a life of homeless exile abroad.

Realising their mistake, however, many of these latter speedily returned to Soviet Estonia. Such was the case with a number of our present colleagues, such as Professor E. Link (of the Faculty of Agriculture), Professor G. Rooks (Medicine), Dr. I. Sibul (Medicine), Dr. H. Keres (Mathematics), Dotsent—Senior Reader—J. Silvet (Philology), to mention only a few, all of whom have since resumed work at the University.

The University Administration understands that several other former members of the teaching staff, who have hitherto remained abroad, have expressed a wish to return to Soviet Estonia. We shall be glad to welcome them back; they have a worthy part to play in the great work of the socialist reconstruction of our country.

Among those who left Estonia there were, of course, others, individuals of the type of the Fascist Agent E. Kant, who held the post of Rector (Chancellor) of the University during the period of occupation. The former professor of English philology, Ants Oras, similarly deserted his country. Emigration appears to have wiped out the last vestiges of Oras's self-respect, and he is now engaged in slandering his own native land, his own people.

Neither is there anything surprising in the fact that gentry of the like of Oras, who dare not even contemplate the idea of returning to Estonia, should prefer the role of outcast vagrants, eking out a wretched life on the coppers thrown them by their new masters.

IMMEDIATELY after the liberation of Tartu the work of restoring the University was taken in hand. Those students and university workers who had fought in the ranks or who had evacuated to the rear, reached the town on the heels of the victorious Soviet troops and joined forces with their colleagues who had stayed in Estonia during the occupation. Thanks to the friendly assistance of the Soviet Government, studies were resumed at the University as early as November, 1944.

Laboratories and libraries were re-equipped or put in order by the joint voluntary efforts of students, teachers, workers, and employees of the University itself. Large consignments of chemicals, apparatus, books, &c., came in from other Soviet republics. The Soviet Government saw to it that the entire personnel of the University—students and teachers alike—were provided with better living conditions than they had ever enjoyed at any previous time.

From year to year the life and work of the University have steadily improved. We now have nine faculties (Medicine, Law, History and Languages, Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture, Forestry, Mathematics and Physics, Biology and Geography, and Physical Culture), comprising seventeen departments in all. Two independent new faculties (Pharmacy and Philology) are to be opened in the near future. The teaching staff and the number of regular students are greater than at any time in the history of the University.

The vast majority of students come from working-class and peasant families. The old pernicious type of the idle, rich waster has disappeared altogether. With only the

rarest exceptions our students work with enthusiasm and complete their studies successfully. Nor is this all. Very many of them are carrying out independent research work as members of the general Students' Scientific Association, or of the many study circles now in existence. Since the second World War they have contributed a number of valuable prize works.

Interest in the arts is rapidly gaining ground among our students. They have their own choirs, dramatic clubs, literary circles, &c., which afford ample scope for individual interest and initiative. The choirs alone have a membership of well over 350. A number of talented young student writers, in whose work the joy, confidence, and comradeship characteristic of life in Soviet society find expression, have already made their debuts.

Sports and athletics are attracting increasing numbers of students. The Sports Club of the University has over 600 members, among whom are such outstanding figures as Heino Lipp, holder of Soviet records in putting the shot, discus throwing and the decathlon, and Aino Lukas, brilliant horsewoman and Soviet champion for 1947. Many of the best all-round athletes in Estonia are members of the Club. The University basketball teams, both men's and women's, won the Estonian championships for this year. And these examples are by no means exceptional. There is hardly a branch of sport in which our students do not stand in the forefront of Estonian athletics. We have no lack of first-class field and track sportsmen, tennis players, swimmers, exhibition divers, riders, skiers, fencers, footballers, &c. The spacious rooms of the new University gymnasium are filled from dawn till dusk with healthy, cheerful, and vigorous young enthusiasts. Our student athletes compete successfully not only within the boundaries of the Estonian S.S.R., but also in the huge sports contests organised on an all-Union scale.

Scientific research work among the teaching staff is also expanding rapidly and has come to play an important part in the solution of basic problems of the national economy and cultural life of the Estonian S.S.R., of which it forms an integral part. Two members of the University, Dr. M. Pill and Dr. J. Aamissepp—both specialists in agriculture—have been awarded Stalin prizes.

A new system of research scholarships has been introduced, and we already have no less than 30 "aspirants," or post-graduates who are continuing their work at the University in order to qualify for admission to the teaching staff.

MORE original text-books in the Estonian language have been published by members of the University during the last three years than throughout the entire existence of bourgeois Estonia.

Mention might be made of Professor Tehver's *Anatomy of Domestic Animals and Physiology of Domestic Animals*; The *General Histology* of Professors Tehver, Aunap, and Poska-Teiss; Professor Veiderpass's *Outline of Pharmaceutical Prescription and Galenic Pharmacy*; Professor Haldre's *Radiology*; Professor Kingisepp's *Pharmacology*; Professor Ariste's *Estonian Phonetics*; Dotsent Kaosaar's *Finnish Reader and Grammar*, and Dotsent Kangro's *Higher Algebra, Part I*. These are only a few examples chosen at random.

A number of University workers have been granted the honorary title of Scientific Worker of Merit (Professors J. Veski, Alma Tomingas, A. Valdes, H. Riikoja). Some are active members of the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian S.S.R. (Professors A. Koort, A. Kipper, F. Laja, Alma Tomingas, J. Veski, and A. Luha), while others are corresponding members (Professors A. Vaga, K. Orviku, &c.).

Many members of the University staff have been decorated with orders and medals of the Soviet Union, such as professors A. Vaga, Dotsent K. Taev, Dotsent A. Mitt, Professor A. Kipper, to mention only a few, while Professors V. Vadi and H. Kruus occupy positions in the Central Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

The direction of general educational, scientific, and pedagogical work at the University is undertaken by the University Council, which consists of 68 members. The Council discusses and ratifies the University finances, the planning of scientific and research work, and the arrangement of academic sessions and conferences together with such administrative and economic questions as building operations, capital repairs, &c. Reports on the fulfilment of all such projects are submitted to the Council for confirmation. It is responsible for the appointment of new members to vacancies on the staff, discusses the periodical reports dealing with the work of individual Faculties and Departments, and uses them as a basis for its decisions with regard to future activities.

Yet another function of the University Council is the granting of academic degrees. These are awarded on the basis of an original thesis submitted by the candidate and assessed in open debate. In a word the Council settles all vital questions attaching to the work of the University. Major decisions are taken by secret vote.

THE practical administration of the University is carried out (in conformity with the decisions of the University Council and the instructions and suggestions of the Ministry for Higher Education of the U.S.S.R.) by the Rectorate, a collective organ composed of the Rector (Prof. A. Koort), the four "Pro-Rectors"—or Vice-Chancellors (for studies, extra-mural tuition, scientific research and business

management)—and the Secretary of the University Branch of the Communist Party.

Mention has already been made of the part played by the Soviet Government and the Bolshevik Party in the steady improvement of the welfare of both students and members of the staff. All students whose work is satisfactory are provided with scholarships. The town has placed several large buildings at the disposal of the University to serve as hostels for the students. Members of the teaching staff receive high salaries graduated on a sliding scale according to their qualifications. All University workers and students are enabled to spend their vacations in the best rest homes of Estonia and the Soviet Union. Dozens of University workers now possess their own private cars—a rare luxury in the days of bourgeois Estonia. Several members of the staff have built modern new houses for themselves (Professor Tehver, Dotsent Sare), while many others are rapidly bringing their work to completion (Professors Ariste, Karu, Haldre, Linkberg, Vau, &c.).

The University budget, which formerly constituted a mere fraction of the general budget for the town, now considerably exceeds it. This fact alone should amply testify to the favourable conditions for development which the university now enjoys.

The University itself is now building on a big scale. The restoration of the University gymnasium, wrecked by the Germans, has been completed. A new Chemistry Wing is already in use. Work on the building of a large new students' hostel is due to begin in the immediate future. The construction of new buildings to house the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture is already in hand.

The entire personnel of the University is organised in the trade unions, members of the staff, workers and employees; belongs to Employees' Trade Union of the University' while the students have their own separate organisation. The Unions carry out extensive social and educational activities, look after the living and working conditions of their members, provide rest homes and sanatoriums, help them to build and maintain their own homes, stimulate and arrange sporting, cultural and artistic activities of every type. Representatives of the trade unions share in the work of the University Council and the Rectorate. All trade union activities are carried out on a genuinely democratic basis.

Both students and members of the University teaching staff play an active part in the political life of the Estonian S.S.R. The best of them have joined the ranks of the Communist Party and the Communist Youth Association. Among our students and University workers we have both delegates to the Supreme Soviets (Parliaments) of the Estonian S.S.R. and of the Soviet Union, and members of the local Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

The entire personnel of the University—members of the staff, students, employees, and workers alike—understand fully that in Soviet society science belongs to the working people and to the working people alone; that there is no one, and nothing to interfere with the free development of creative scientific work. A firm economic basis, full political freedom, the steady support of the Soviet Government and the Bolshevik Party, the

friendly co-operation of the other peoples of the Soviet Union—all these circumstances are evidence of the present flourishing condition and pledges for future of the State University of Tartu. The entire personnel of the University love their socialist mother country, and will continue to devote the best of their knowledge, the best of their abilities, to her service.

Signed by the Faculty:

Prof. dr. A. Koort
 Prof. dr. H. Luoma
 Prof. dr. P. Ariste
 Prof. Alwin
 Prof. dr. M. M. M. M.
 Prof. Luoma-Rägo
 Prof. dr. N. V. V. V.
 Prof. I. T. T. T.
 Prof. J. J. J. J.
 Dots. B. Pravdin
 Prof. J. J. J. J.
 Prof. K. K. K. K.
 Prof. F. F. F. F.
 Prof. dr. A. A. A. A.
 Dots. J. J. J. J.
 Prof. J. J. J. J.
 Prof. dr. M. M. M. M.

prof. doktor H. K. K.
 prof. doktor E. K. K.
 Prof. Noldemar Nagel
 Prof. dr. A. L. L.
 J. R. R.
 Prof. H. K. K.
 Prof. dr. August Vaga
 Prof. dr. Axel Kipper
 Prof. dr. K. K. K.
 Prof. T. R. R.
 Prof. K. K. K.
 Dots. J. J. J.
 Prof. J. J. J.
 Prof. dr. M. M. M.
 Prof. dr. V. V. V.
 Prof. dr. M. M. M.
 Prof. dr. K. K. K.
 Prof. dr. K. K. K.
 Prof. dr. K. K. K.

HOLIDAYS IN THE U.S.S.R.

By O. A. Watts

Miss Watts lived in the U.S.S.R. for a number of years and returned after the war.

EVERYONE in the Soviet Union who works has an annual holiday with full pay. The length of the holiday varies according to the work. The shortest holiday is one of twelve working days, and this is given to unskilled workers and semi-skilled workers. Those engaged in more strenuous work are entitled to an annual leave of eighteen working days.

In the U.S.S.R. everyone receives full pay during his holiday, so the only saving to be done would be for extras. Long journeys which may be necessary to reach the sea are no obstacle, for travel is cheap. As for food, in the country and on the farms, dairy produce and fruit are usually plentiful and cheaper than in the cities.

Many people spend their holidays at holiday homes or sanatoriums, and often the holiday at these places is free. A free place to a holiday home or sanatorium, a "putyovka" as it is called, is generally given by the trade unions to those workers whose work has been outstanding, or to those whose health is poor and who are in need of treatment and a rest. A medical examination is essential before a putyovka free or otherwise to a sanatorium is given. The doctor of the relevant factory or institution will, after the examination, advise the person which places are suitable or unsuitable for his health. For instance, he may need special treatment for rheumatism, in which case he might be recommended to have mud baths at Matsesta. If he has heart trouble he may be advised not to go to the mountains. The doctor's recommendation goes to the bureau which dispenses holiday putyovkas, and the person's health is always taken into account when the putyovkas are distributed. In addition to free ones, many putyovkas are given at a reduced rate which will cover part of the cost; and often they are given not only for the worker, but for his wife as well.

Those who are not in need of special treatment usually go to a holiday home, and not to a sanatorium. At the latter there is a strict regime. All visitors must conform to the rules, have the treatment prescribed by the doctor, rest for a definite period after lunch (the "dead hour," as it is called), and they must be under the care of the resident doctors and nurses.

At a holiday home, which is usually a vast establishment, visitors are freer. There is still a resident doctor and the visitor can take the waters or mud baths if he or she

desires it, and quiet is enforced for the "dead hour" after lunch. But no one is obliged to take any treatment nor is it obligatory to be in the building during the "dead hour." The visitor can go swimming or walking, or play tennis, or do anything else at any time. The only thing that is fixed is the time for meals.

Since the question of cost does not arise the real problem over which there is much argument is how to spend the vacation and where to go. The Soviet Union is such a vast land that the choice is almost unlimited. There are the mountains for climbing or for resting; or the holiday maker can take a trip on a river by steamer, or go on a hunting or fishing expedition. He can visit the sunny south or choose a skiing holiday, or go to the lakes for a boating holiday; in fact do anything it is possible to imagine in any kind of climatic conditions.

THERE are holiday homes, sanatoriums and hotels for holiday makers all over the country, and they are open all the year round. Though the majority of people like to take their holiday in the summer, there are some who prefer to have theirs in the winter and to go skiing and skating.

Early autumn is a popular holiday time for those going to the shores of the Black Sea. It is not too hot there in these months and the air is soft and balmy.

The Russians call this time of the year in the south "the velvet season." It is the best time of the year for fruit too, the time when the grapes have ripened and wine-making begins.

In many places there are tourist camps for hikers, where they can put up for the night or for longer periods if they wish. The amenities here are simpler but still good and cheap. A hiking holiday which often has the interest of exploration to give it a particular zest is growing rapidly in popularity among young people.

At all holiday resorts there are open-air theatres and cinemas. During the summer months the theatre companies from the large towns go on tour to play in smaller places in the country and by the sea. Many groups of actors, actresses, other than famous theatre companies, and musicians too, go to the resorts to perform to the holiday-makers. And excellent performances can be seen and heard even at the most out-of-way places. I remember hearing the Georgian State Orchestra from Tbilisi, one

summer at Gagri. It was there for a month and gave really magnificent concerts. The open-air theatre, which was right on the shores of the Black Sea, was crowded at each performance, and those who could not get in used to sit on the beach and listen from there.

It is possible to do all the usual things at the holiday places. As already mentioned there are tennis courts for those who are enthusiasts for this game or for those who wish to learn. Many people play volley-ball, particularly in the evenings when it gets cooler. Even inland there is much water; and river or lake boating or canoeing is very popular. The more sedate prefer walks and excursions which can be taken anywhere and to many places of interest. Visiting the local beauty spots, watching the waterfalls, or the more vigorous activity of climbing have their devotees. But what nearly everyone appears eager to do at the seaside is to go down to the beach and sunbathe with a dip in the water to cool off when the heat becomes too great. My Russian friends' contentment with just lying on the beach, completely inactive, amazed me who was used to all kinds of beach games and fooling about. For them a holiday appeared to mean doing nothing. In the evenings, in addition to the concerts and film shows there is dancing, usually in the open air.

One very attractive way of spending a holiday is to go to the lakes, hire a canoe, and travel from lake to lake. This holiday is often taken in groups, small or large, but there are some who go alone. There are holiday centres dotted all along the shores of the lakes (something like the youth hostels in Britain) where the visitor can put up for the night or for as long as is desired. The domestic work is done by paid workers and the centres provide excellent food, if simply served.

Many Russians have their roots in the country and like to spend their holidays going "home" to visit their relatives in the village. Often they take the whole family with them, and spend a real country holiday with the usual country activities. A great many people with small children go to the country places not far from town for the whole summer. At the end of May and in June there is an exodus from the towns to the country. Many people living in town have a small wooden bungalow in the country, a "dacha" as it is called, or a flat in a co-operative "dacha." These people like to spend the whole summer there, where their enthusiasm for gardening has full scope. They will also swim in the local lake or river, or what is a very popular holiday activity, go to the forest to pick berries of many varieties and, later, mushrooms. This is a family holiday and generally an inexpensive one, too. For part of the time the children may be away in camp. Often people who haven't their own "dacha" rent one or part of one for the summer, and those who are working will travel to and fro, looking forward to the week-end. The railways which serve the summer resorts outside the towns, are nearly all electrified and

there are special summer services to cater for this widespread custom.

Near Moscow there are some very beautiful spots with dense pine forests, rivers and streams which are good for bathing, boating, and fishing. In the early summer people are attracted to the forests by the wild strawberries which grow so profusely and are so much more fragrant than the cultivated ones. Later strawberries give place to wild raspberries and blueberries to be had for the picking. A country holiday always means mushrooming.

The children in the U.S.S.R. are well looked after in every way, and holidays are no exception. Many children go with their families to the "dachas," some go to the resorts, but very many go for part of their long summer holidays to the special children's camps, which are generally very well equipped and spacious buildings. The nursery schools usually move into summer quarters in the country in May or early June, and stay there till the end of August. They take their equipment with them; the special-sized furniture and all the toys. There are visiting days when the parents come out to see their children and to see that the holiday quarters are in every way satisfactory. These "parents' days" are not always looked forward to by the staffs who occasionally complain that the children are upset after the visit. Some of the parents bring too many sweets for their offspring with unhappy results.

The pioneer camps for school children are in beautiful places in the country or by the sea, and the children are sent in batches, all of them to spend a month, some longer. Those children who are delicate or whose home conditions are not very good, are often able to spend two or three months at a holiday home. These "holiday camps" are provided by the different trade unions as well as by other bodies and, like their parents, the children can and do receive "putyovkas" free, and at reduced rates. It is a sight in the summer to see trainloads of children going to or returning from their summer holidays.

In the towns, summer "playgrounds" are arranged in the parks. These are for those children whose parents do not wish them to go away from home or who can only spend part of the holiday away. There are supervisors at the "playgrounds" who organise games and other activities. The children come every day except Sunday and spend the whole day there throughout the summer. Meals are provided at the playground.

Besides the annual vacations, there are the national and international holidays falling at different times of the year. Russians love parties and use every holiday as an excuse for celebrating. So these holidays are always merry, even when they come in the winter. There are several of these holidays, the most important being the May and November holidays. Both of these give the people two free days, and when Sunday is included it makes a three-day break.

In central Russia spring comes later than in England, and there is a tradition that the spring-cleaning must be finished before the May holidays. The majority of buildings get a coat of paint, outside too. The November holidays which commemorate the Revolution are equally an occasion for cleaning and decorating; this time houses are prepared for the winter. There are big meetings, concerts, and parties, organised by all factories and offices. There are always parties at home too, at which there are far too many delicious things to eat. These parties generally finish up with music, singing and dancing. The children are not forgotten at these holidays either. Parties are arranged for them by the trade unions, factories and other organisations. In addition to entertainments at the parties, they are given small presents to take home. Making gifts on special holiday occasions is an adult custom too. During school holidays, in addition to the special children's theatres, there are afternoon performances for the children at other theatres. This also applies to Sundays throughout the year. The Moscow Art Theatre, for instance, usually plays Maeterlink's "Blue Bird" at Sunday matinees, the Bolshoi Opera House often has a performance of a ballet suitable for children. The New Year is another holiday which all Russians celebrate. There are New Year parties and entertainments for children with decorated Christmas trees, and a Father Christmas (grandfather Frost, they call him) to give the prizes.

My husband and I spent our holidays in the Soviet Union in many different ways. One year we went to a place on the River Volga not far from Kalinin. There are beautiful forests here, as in most parts of central Russia.

The river was fast-flowing at this spot and there was a wonderful wide, sandy beach. We used to take boats for the day and go off down the river. It was always easy going downstream but much more difficult returning. In fact there were places where we found it easier to get out and pull the boat, as the current was so strong. The local peasants used to bring fresh fruit and berries to the river beach to sell to holiday-makers, who mostly rented cottages or rooms in the village. There is an old monastery at this place, very picturesque, and with an interesting wishing-wall. You shout your wish and it comes echoing back to you after a few seconds, in varying tones. It was my first summer in the Soviet Union and I made my wish in English. The Russian friend who took me accused me of cheating as no one else could understand what I wanted, but my wish did come true.

One summer we spent in a village not

far from Moscow, the very beautiful place where Pushkin had lived. I had wanted to go to the South that year, but some Russian friends persuaded us to spend the summer with them, and we did not regret it. We shared a house which had an extra room so that we could put up visitors. The garden of our house ran down to a small lake where we could swim, and this lake also supplied us with fish the whole summer. Our visitors were always horrified when they learnt we rose at daybreak to collect the fish from our overnight nets. But we found that the visitors were usually up in time to help us count the night's catch. We had in addition a lovely stream nearby. This, too, had plenty of fish. Indeed the place was an angler's paradise. We used frequently to go along the stream for a day's fishing or, for a change, boating up or down stream.

One holiday was spent travelling about the Caucasus, when we went on a Black Sea steamer for a week's trip along the coast as far as Batoumi. There we spent some time in the Botanical Gardens, and later travelled to Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, and from there by car over the famous Georgian Military Highway.

Other holidays we spent at different Black Sea resorts. We usually went on our own but sometimes we made up a party of four or five, and these holidays with Russians were some of those we shall remember longest. Whether we went alone or with others, we always made friends with the local people, wherever it might be. We found the Russians so ready to make friends; and often some would join us on trips and excursions or long walks. When by the sea in the hot weather we too spent the day on the beach, where we introduced our fellow holiday makers to our beach games. We, too, followed the local practice and reserved trips for cooler days. In the evenings we joined other visitors at a beach restaurant where we dined and danced. We would sample the local dishes at each restaurant in turn, before we settled down to be regular customers at one for our holiday.

The best holidays of all were spent in a small village in the mountains overlooking the Black Sea. This place, inaccessible, was indescribably beautiful. Though the journey was a very tiring one, getting there was always worth the fatigue, and we received such a welcome each time from our village friends that it felt as though we were coming home.

Looking back on our varied experience of holidays one thing stands out, the complete absence of mechanised vulgarity, of tawdriness, and of rowdiness. This was true of the popular resorts as of the more individual places. Yet another striking feature is the richness of the U.S.S.R. in holiday possibilities and the varied way in which people spend these holidays.

TURKMENIAN WOMEN'S TRAINING COLLEGE

By O. Petukhova

THE process of modernisation has rightly been a slow one in remote villages of Turkmenia. There was never any wholesale artificial compulsory transformation of life. To be satisfactory, changes in attitudes, habits, and customs had to arise logically out of the demands made by life. The war made such demands and the Teaching School or College was one reply to the demand for women teachers in a country where the age-old Mohammedan traditions were deeply rooted and particularly so in the village.

"A man with a strong arm will get the better of one, a scientist will get the better of thousands," reads an old Turkmenian saying, which shows that the people to whom education was denied had none the less a great respect for it. Literacy was negligible in Turkmenia (Central Asia) before the revolution: seven out of a thousand of the population. The overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the aïls (villages) had never seen a school or a printed word and were completely under the influence of the grim "adat," the unwritten law of the grandfathers, which defined the mode of life of the Turkmenians. In 1915 Turkmenia, which stretches over a territory of 484,000 square kms., had only 58 elementary schools (mekhtebe). Girls did not attend school; the "adat" forbade women to mix with men. At the age of eight or ten the Turkmenian girl was given away in marriage, actually sold, and she became the slave and plaything of the husband.

The re-education of the Eastern women slaves was a very arduous and delicate task. It was extremely difficult to change their outward mode of life and still more difficult to root out the old views and habits.

The revolution has given the Turkmenian woman all the civic rights as well as the possibility of receiving education. The wide network of schools provides education for all children up to 14 years of age. At present girls as well as boys attend Seven and Ten Year schools.

The war took the men away from their jobs. Their places were taken by women. The men teachers were also drafted into the army. And as before the war there were few women teachers, it became urgently necessary to train new women. That was how the Turkmenian pedagogical school or training college came into existence in 1943.

The first enrolment of students was not very successful. The plan provided for the admission of more girls from outlying aïls, so that after graduation they might increase the body of teachers of the local schools.

But these girls who had rarely been in a town could not break away from the customary life and set out for so distant a place.

The second enrolment was different.

The best propagandists for the school were the students who had completed their first year's study. They went home for the summer vacations and in the autumn returned with many girls who wished to enter the school.

Applications for entrance increased from year to year. The girls began to arrive in groups. In 1947 five girls came from the remote collective farm "Kommunist," Farab district: Tota Durdiyeva, Rabia Kurbanova, Sherpa Ipshayeva, Suldurda Italazova and Yazdoulat Kurbanova. They related how keen they were to study. The five girls were inseparable: they shared the same room in the hostel, did their homework and went out for walks together, made trips to town and visited their homes and always in company.

In 1948, of the first year students 240 were girls, of the second year, 150, and the third year, 66. The first year students are easily distinguished from the others. The newcomers will not discard their national costumes; they adhere most faithfully to every little item of the traditional Turkmenian garment. A long silk dress flashed with red or blue, broad sleeves which narrow at the wrist and cover even the fingers, on the chest and throat are intricate multi-coloured beads or copper ornaments; on the head a light metal ring from which suspends a bright silk neckerchief; the hair of the Turkmenian girl is done up in four plaits.

The more at home the girls become in their new surrounding the more noticeable becomes the change in their appearance: two plaits take the place of four, the heavy headgear disappears as do the cumbersome ornaments. Then goes the inconvenient dress, which hinders movement, dancing and play. In its stead the girls wear the dark blue clothes of the school which they receive free like the footwear, underwear and bed clothing. The third year girls never wear the Turkmenian dress.

"We shall go back to our aïls and people will not make fun of us for wearing European clothes; our people respect the teachers," say the girls.

At this school the course for these Turkmenian girls includes education, psychology, mathematics, history, geography, natural science, the native tongue and literature, general and special methods. But the teaching personnel do not confine their efforts to instruction alone. At first the girls have to be taught what appears to us

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S.C.R. ACTIVITIES

Reports from all Sections

SOME idea of the variety of subjects covered by the phrase "cultural relations" may be gathered from the following account of the activities undertaken by the different Sections and Departments of the Society.

It cannot be too often stressed that the work of the Society does in fact mean very real "relations" with the Soviet Union, and that one of the most satisfying aspects of its activity is the use made of its services by Soviet colleagues who seek information on, and contacts in, the corresponding professional spheres in Britain. It is impossible to set out all of them in a short report, just as it is impossible to set out all the inquiries received from British members, so that, though only a few are mentioned here, this constant interchange occupies all the sections.

ARCHITECTURE GROUP.— An extremely successful Symposium, which crowded the music room to more than capacity, was held on March 17, on the subject of "What kind of Architecture do we want in Britain?" The chair was taken by Prof. W. G. Holford, and contributors included Mr. R. Furneaux Jordan, Mr. Peter Shephard, Mr. Dex Harrison, and Mr. Andrew Boyd, who were followed by a lively discussion from the floor. Considerable space was devoted by the professional Press to accounts of the proceedings, and the whole has been transcribed for the benefit of Soviet architects. The Group is currently working on a request from the Architecture Section of V.O.K.S. for material on post-war British domestic architecture. Bulletin No. 20 has now been issued to members, and contains summaries of important articles from the Soviet architectural Press. Spare copies are available to non-members at 1s. Assistance with exhibitions and translations has been given to the international conference of architectural students, which met in London in April.

CHESS SECTION.— Bulletin No. 17, dealing with the Moscow-Budapest match, has been issued to members. Copies of the book of the Anglo-Soviet match of 1947 are still available at 5s. (postage 6d.), and a number of favourable reviews have appeared, notably in "The British Chess Magazine," and "Chess." The annotations by Grand-master Levenfish are variously described as "excellent" (*Tablet*), "brilliant" (*Daily Worker*), and "splendid" (*Bristol Observer*).

EDUCATION SECTION.— The annual general meeting was held on March 24, and at the end of the business two most welcome visitors were introduced to the members—

People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. Larissa, Alexandrovskaya, and Mme. Chechotkina, members of a Soviet women's delegation visiting Britain. Mme. Chechotkina made a short speech describing the high regard in which the teaching profession was held in the U.S.S.R., and welcoming the important work of the Section in removing misunderstandings between Britain and the U.S.S.R. After the meeting members had the pleasure of meeting informally Mme. Kolantarova, a teacher of English in the Soviet Embassy.

Other visitors whom the Section was delighted to welcome were Mme. N. M. Parfenova and her interpreter, Mme. Lazareva, who visited Britain in April for the conference of the National Union of Teachers. An informal reception for members of the Section was held at 14, Kensington Square on April 25th, and a public meeting addressed by Mme. Parfenova, with Prof. J. A. Lawers in the chair, at the University of London Institute of Education on April 27th. In addition the Section was asked to arrange a number of visits for the guests to educational institutions in and near London, and in spite of the Easter holiday season a full programme was carried out.

A Bulletin on "Pedagogy and Psychology" (summarised from an article by Leontiev and Kazansky) has been issued to members. On May 27th a discussion meeting was arranged, jointly with the New Education Fellowship, on "Russia Goes to School," opened by the author, Mrs. Beatrice King.

EXHIBITION DEPARTMENT.— The department continues to supply illustrative material in response to requests from different quarters, with schools and training colleges heading the list. The exhibition on the architecture of Moscow, for example, was arranged for the International Conference of Architectural Students in April, 1949. Displays on Soviet ballet and on children's books were provided for lectures arranged by the Society. Preliminary steps are being taken towards the formation of an Art Section, and the Secretary of the Exhibition Department would be glad to receive the names of members and others who may be interested.

FILM SECTION.— A showing of "Michurin," a film biography in colour of the great Russian naturalist, produced by Alexander Dovzhenko and with musical score by Dmitri Shostakovich, was arranged in conjunction with the Science Section on May 5th at 18, Kensington Palace Gardens (by courtesy of the Soviet Embassy). The Section will shortly be open to application for membership from those engaged in the profession.

LEGAL SECTION.—Bulletins No 6. and 7 have now been issued to members, dealing respectively with Soviet People's Judges and with a model constitution for collective farms.

LIBRARY.—In addition to dealing with the usual wide range of enquiries, the library has been engaged in translating and summarising the main speeches in the important sessions of the Union of Soviet Writers and the Soviet Academy of Arts held early in the year. .

MUSIC COMMITTEE.—A delightful and informative lecture on Soviet "Ballet" by Iris Morley, with Joseph Macleod in the chair, was held on April 5th. A recital by Peter Bornstein (violin) and Laurence Gerish (piano) was held on May 23rd, with a programme of works by Prokofiev, Kabal-evsky, Khachaturian and Shostakovich. At the Society's suggestion, the London Philharmonic Orchestra arranged a chamber concert on April 10th at the Wigmore Hall, when Mme. Oda Slobodskaya sang songs by classical and Soviet composers, and the Aeolian quartet played Chaikovsky's String Quartet in D (Op. 11) and, as a first performance in Britain, the String Quartet No. 3 (Op. 73) by Shostakovich. The postponed discussion on "Problems of Soviet Musical Theory," between Alan Bush and Scott Goddard, was planned for June 9th.

SCIENCE SECTION.—Work has begun on the centenary celebrations of I.P. Pavlov, which will be held in September. Among those who have already joined the Commemoration Committee, in addition to members of the Science Advisory Council, are Mr. A. L. Bacharach, Dr. Elizabeth Bunbury, Mr. J. G. Crowther, Prof. N. M. Dott, Dr. W. W. Gordon, Mr. G. C. Grindley, Sir Charles Sherrington, and Prof. C. H.

Waddington. Dr. Dorothy Needham, F.R.S., and Prof. D. H. Smyth have joined the Science Advisory Council. Sir Robert Watson-Watt has asked to be relieved of the office of president due to his inability, through pressure of work, to give the position the attention it deserved.

THEATRE SECTION.—The Annual general meeting was held on April 1st, Dame Edith Evans presiding. Future plans include the preparation of two films on actors of the Moscow Art Theatre, presented by V.O.K.S. to the Film Section, and an increased number of smaller gatherings in the Music Room. The gramophone recordings by members of the Moscow Art Theatre, presented by V.O.K.S. to the Theatre Section, were played for Russian-speaking members of the Society and their friends, with a commentary by Mrs. Maya Bunn, on April 29th.

WRITERS GROUP.—An afternoon on Soviet children's books, designed specially for children, was arranged for May 14th, when Dr. Bertha Malmick and Miss Pearl Binder described and explained the books. The Pushkin anniversary celebrations planned for June included a concert of songs and other music connected with Pushkin (arranged by the Music Committee) on June 13th; a dinner at the Dorchester on June 16th; and lectures on Pushkin's poetry by Henry Gifford (June 21st) and Pushkin's prose works, by David Magarshack (June 28th). A survey has also been undertaken of the celebrations planned by the University Departments of Russian, and a bibliography of English translations of Pushkin's works has been prepared. The Group continues to send to the U.S.S.R. regular reviews of current British publications, and these have been most appreciatively received.

Women's College—from Page 35

the most elementary things such as washing the floor, ironing underwear, sewing, stitching, knitting and needlework. They have to be accustomed to personal hygiene. The teacher is an important figure at the school. It is she who directs the development of the girls. It should be acknowledged that the Turkmenian girls who had come from remote villages, easily and quickly learn not only the sciences but also the cultural habits and customs.

The grim "adat" prohibited choral singing, dancing or games. Before the revolution the Turkmenian people did not have national group dances, choruses or dramatics. All this the young people are now being taught at school. The teacher must be able to sing and play musical instruments, to organise drama, sports and other circles. That is why serious attention is devoted to the organisation of leisure activities. All the 18 lecturers of the college conduct one or another circle: choral, string instruments, drama, sports, verse speaking, gymnastics, national, and ballroom dancing, dressmaking or embroidery. The drama circle of this

college is very popular in town, and at contests the Turkmenian girls always win the highest honours.

The college lives a busy life. Class studies go on until two in the afternoon. After dinner and the daily out-of-door relaxation, there is preparation under the supervision of instructors; and then from seven until supper, leisure activities. The latter is the happiest time of the day. Singing, music and laughter ring throughout the spacious two-storey building. Kono-nenko, Gapurova, Kurbanova, Redzhopova, Khasnutdinova and Berdiyeva—all young lecturers enjoy the leisure work just as much as their students. On Sundays the school has amateur performances or cinema shows.

In 1946 the school gave its first 55 graduates—women teachers for four-year schools. Ten of the girls who finished with honours, decided to continue their education. They were sent to the Ashkabad Pedagogical Institute. That is how the Turkmenian woman is aspiring for higher education and contributing her share to developing the culture of the Republic.

NOTES AND NEWS

Restoration.

Byelorussia. Nine thousand two hundred villages destroyed by the Germans have been rebuilt since the war. In the suburbs of Minsk, where a motor works and tractor plant have been built, small townships have sprung up. In the forests 50 new settlements have been built for the lumberjacks. In other parts of the Republic huge areas of marshlands have been reclaimed and now show fields of grain, new villages, electric power plants and machine and tractor stations.

In the Donbas. Under the post-war Five-Year Plan over 400 shafts and pits and buildings, 277 concentration factories, and 26 briquette works are being restored or built anew.

In the Donets Coalfields. Two hundred and twenty-two main mines have been restored. Over 600 million cubic metres of water have been pumped out and some 800 miles of galleries restored.

Baltic Republics. In 1948 industrial production in Latvia increased 31 per cent., in Lithuania 34 per cent., in Estonia 35 per cent.

Development.

Latvia. The light industry has considerably surpassed its pre-war output. In 1948 it produced 79 per cent. more goods than in 1947.

Moldavia. In the Western Regions 678 agricultural co-operatives have been formed with a membership of over 100,000 peasant households. The small artisan workshops that existed eight years ago in Bessarabia have disappeared.

Bashkiria. Formerly a wild primitive territory, rich in forests, rivers, lakes and steppe lands, in oil, coal, rare metals, iron ore and other useful minerals, was only developed by the Soviets, especially under the Five-Year Plan. The autonomous Republic has now become one of the important industrial regions of the Soviet Union, producing oil, lumber, iron and steel, copper, gold, machine-tools, steam boilers, threshers, telephones, typewriters, steel wire, electric bulbs, plywood, rubber goods, footwear, cotton fabrics, and many other manufactured articles. The Bashkirians received a written language only under the Soviet regime.

Issyk-Kul Region of Kirghizia Along the barren route that the explorer Przhevalsky travelled in 1888 there are now over 200 flourishing collective farms served by over 100 tractor brigades. The region is

being completely electrified. The Regional centre is a town with clubs, theatres, libraries and numerous industrial enterprises. A large port has been built at one end of the high mountain lake of Issyk-Kul and beautiful health resorts erected.

In the Kuban. New buildings in rural areas include granaries, cattle-breeding farms and administrative buildings, 10,497 houses, for collective farmers, about 6,000 agricultural buildings, over 100 brick yards and 700 cultural institutions erected on collective farms during 1948 alone. Approximately 10,000 builders, 260 engineers and technicians are engaged on rural construction to erect (in 1949) cattle sheds for 248,000 head of cattle, 500 granaries and driers, and 160 brick and tile factories. Collective farmers will pave 400,000 square metres of village streets and pavements, and plant 1,500,000 trees.

Industry.

Workers. Between 1946 and 1949 the number of skilled workers and office employees in the Soviet Union increased by 6.2 millions. In 1948, 50 per cent. of the two million new workers and employees were trainees of trade and factory vocational schools. In that period approximately 4,000 State enterprises, of which 800 were commissioned in 1946, 1,100 in 1947, and 2,100 (or more than half) in 1948, were restored or built anew.

Brick Making. The Soviet inventor Meliya has succeeded in producing a rotating press with high productivity, which makes it possible to produce a great variety of high-quality bricks.

Coal-cutter. The new Soviet coal-cutter simultaneously cuts the seam, hews coal and loads it on to the transporter belt. The combine is serviced by a team of 12 workers, cuts in one operation a strip of coal 1.5 metres thick. On an average each member of the team produces 10-12 ton more coal than when working with an ordinary hewing machine.

Building. A new universal stone-cutting combine, which has passed successful tests in Odessa does the work of more than 250 persons. It is equipped with a transporter belt which mechanises the arduous process of removing stone from under the machine.

750,000 Miles Without Overhaul. The locomotive M-4139 has been running for 15 years, doing 750,000 miles without requiring overhauling.

Training Miners. This year more than 350,000 Soviet miners will receive special training in handling new mechanisation

machinery. The advent of new machinery has brought with it more than 40 new trades in the Soviet coal-mining industry for which the coal-fields now have 162 large training centres and 622 courses operating at collieries.

Agriculture.

Livestock Migrate. Shepherds and drovers of collective farms in the Tian Shan, Issyk-Kul and Frunze Regions conducted a successful drive of more than 500,000 sheep and horses from the high mountain winter pastures to the valleys. Along the route were erected special shelters for rest and food stores as well as mobile zoo-technical and veterinary stations. Two-way radio communication was maintained throughout the drive, and in some sections aeroplanes were used.

Rice. For the first time rice is being cultivated this year in five regions of the central parts of the U.S.S.R., including the Kursk, Voronezh and Stalingrad Regions. Rice is being extensively cultivated in the Kuban, Northern Caucasus, the Maritime Territory and the South Ukraine. Soviet scientists have evolved fast-ripening varieties which may be successfully cultivated in the north, even on the 50th parallel.

New Maize Hybrid. This year a new hybrid variety of maize "Pervenets" will be sown for the first time on large areas in 50 collective farms in the Ukraine. It is quick ripening and of high grain yield. Collective farms of the Kharhov Region are testing another new variety of "Kharkov Star," under field conditions. This variety is notable for its large cobs, heavy grains and considerably higher resistance to agricultural pests.

Frost-Resistant Jute. Varieties of frost-resisting jute—an industrial crop new in the U.S.S.R.—have been developed. They are being grown on experimental fields not only in Central Asia and Transcaucasia, but also in the Kuban Valley.

Tree Planting. A new Soviet-designed tree-planting machine has now gone into production. Driven by a tractor it can cover 10 acres in one hour.

Irrigation. In the Hungry Steppe of Kazakhstan a big irrigation canal, the Kirov, has been dug and green settlements have sprung up on the banks of its two branches. The construction of a third branch is under way. A new, settled, Kzyl-Kumy District now appears on the map. The collective farmers of the District will extend cotton plantations over 3,000 acres this year and build new irrigation projects. This District has two State farms; a cotton growing farm which will double its cotton area this year; and a vine-growing and wine-making State farm occupying 12,500 acres. Forest shelter belts will be planted over a large area in the Hungry Steppe.

Health.

The incidence of Malaria dropped 19.5 per cent. in 1948. In that year the number of places in sanatoria increased by 28,000. Over 1,500,000 people received treatment. The State spent about 2,000 million roubles on treatment of workers in health resorts.

Thirteen research institutes are investigating health resort problems. A new sanatorium for sufferers from rheumatism and gastric ailments has been opened in Yesen-tuki. By the end of the year approximately 50,000 working people will have spent their holidays there.

Holiday Resorts. This year the Budget for State social maintenance allocated 1,865 million roubles for repairs, equipment and upkeep of sanatoria and holiday homes, an increase of 500,000 roubles. The trade unions will send to health resorts this year over two and a half million workers and office employees. Up to date they maintain 759 health centres; forty-five new sanatoria and holiday homes, to accommodate 12,000 people at a time, will be ready by the end of the year, also a new sanatorium for oil workers near Baku. A sanatorium for railwaymen in the Bryansk Region and a holiday rest home near Poltava are being built. The construction of a holiday home in Karaganda for workers of the coal industry will be ready by the summer.

Education.

In the first quarter of 1949, 734,000 students studied in 808 institutions, 298,000 students took correspondence courses. In the same quarter there were 220,000 primary, seven-year and ten-year schools, and technical schools with a total enrolment of 34,500,000, 2,200,000 more than in the first quarter of 1948. Teachers numbered over 1,300,000. In September 1949 there will be 100 per cent. places in the Seven-year school (7-14).

Arising out of the vast afforestation scheme, forestry, agricultural, and other educational institutions have to organise geological, soil, and geo-botanical study of shelter belt routes, and to study on the spot the possibility of irrigating the southern and south-eastern regions of the European part of the U.S.S.R. Higher educational establishments have been instructed to extend popular scientific education on the vital problems of national economy. The staffs of research institutes and laboratories will regularly deliver lectures at factories, mills, and on collective and State farms.

Students. The Universities and teachers' training institutes will this year graduate approximately 60,000 students, agriculture will receive 11,000.

Special institutes to train physical culture instructors are being established, attached to pedagogical institutes. Twenty pedagogical institutes training teachers for primary schools are to be reorganised into

training centres for physical culture instructors. The Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the Russian Federation is extending its scientific research work and is issuing a large amount of special literature on the subject of physical training for school children.

Science.

East Siberia. The Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences has approved the establishment of an East Siberian branch of the Academy at Irkutsk.

Crystallography. The Publishing House of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences has issued the works of E. S. Fedorov, who laid the basis of Russian crystallography.

Palaeontology—Find in Siberia. In the Taimyr Peninsula, beyond the Arctic Circle, a hunting expedition, attracted by a tusk protruding from the ground, discovered the mammoth's skull with the forehead still showing traces of muscular tissue. In the frozen ground below, the animal's neck could be observed, and it is believed that the mammoth's whole carcass is there. The Zoology Institute of the Academy of Sciences is arranging for digging up the mammoth and bringing it to Leningrad.

Archaeology. Over 2,000 years old pieces of jewellery, axes, solid copper daggers, and peculiar rings recalling those found by Schliemann in the second town of Troy, have been discovered in barrow tombs in Georgia, on the southern slopes of the Caucasus range. The excavations prove that an important cultural centre existed here in the middle of the second century B.C. The finds also include ceramic stoves with flues—pottery of various colours, religious objects such as altars, statuettes of oxen used for burning sacrificial incense. A spacious pantheon occupying an area of 1,700 square feet, surrounded by a stone wall some 13 feet high was uncovered.

Another discovery is Ilurat, an ancient town of the Scythians on the Kerch Peninsula, of the first centuries A.D. Ilurat was strongly fortified; its fortress walls reach a thickness of over six metres. A number of buildings near one of the walls have been uncovered.

Excavations in Turkmenia. Archaeologists of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tashkent, and Ashkhabad have for the last three years been investigating ancient historical monuments in Turkmenia. Digging for the capital of the Parthian State, Nisa, they have found flint instruments and remnants of a wall which surrounded the ancient city. At the end of 1948 excavations of Nisa uncovered large rhytons (vessels in the shape of wine horns) belonging to the Parthian kings. The lower part of these vessels is covered with images of gryphons, centaurs, and women, the upper edge carries a frieze

representing entire scenes, mostly connected with the Dionysian cult.

Lobachevsky Prizes for Geometry. The Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has announced a competition for two prizes honouring the great Russian mathematician Nikolai Lobachevsky, to be awarded for the best works on geometry. The first prize will be awarded to Soviet or foreign scientists, the second prize to Soviet authors only.

Cultural Items

Discoveries. "Cantata for the opening of the Polytechnical Exhibition in Moscow in 1872," a Chaikovsky composition in manuscript for choir, orchestra and solo tenor, has just been discovered. Performed for the Exhibition which marked the 200th anniversary of the birth of Peter the Great, the unpublished score was forgotten by everybody. Following a meeting of the Moscow Conservatoire Chair of Composition on January 5, 1949, the score is to be published and included in the Conservatoire's symphony concert programmes.

Fifty-seven letters from the well-known art critic V. V. Stasov to the famous Russian astronomer Engelhardt were discovered by I. Nazarov in the archives of the Kazan Observatory. The letters give a critical analysis of the Russian art and literature of the period 1886-1906. The letters were probably brought to Kazan over 40 years ago when, at the request of the astronomer, the library and entire equipment of the Engelhardt Observatory were transferred from Dresden to Kazan University.

Cinema. Three new three-dimensional films—the first shorts—will open a new season at the experimental "Sereokino" cinema in Moscow. One deals with the Crimea and Caucasus health resorts, a second is a scientific colour film on "Crystals" and the third is a comic—"Caran d'Ache on the Ice" (Caran d'Ache is one of the best loved Soviet circus clowns.)

Architects. Over 240 designs from towns and villages were received for the All-Russian competition for the best public and domestic buildings erected in 1948 in the R.S.F.S.R.

Criticism. R. Bershadsky, a reader, writes to "Literaturnaya Gazeta" (December, 1949) severely criticising the inadequate provision for seeing the older film classics. Outside the only repertory cinema in the Soviet Union—in Moscow—queues in the frost and cold, and "house full" signs were to be seen daily. The great demand for old Soviet films, especially from young Soviet people who have never seen these, remains unsatisfied. The cinema sometimes has to wait years to get the classic of its choice, and is often compelled to take what it can get and not what the audience wants to see. The shortcomings must be overcome and repertory cinemas of a similar kind opened in all the big cities.

Theatre Honoured. The Order of the Red Banner of Labour has been awarded to the Moscow Mossoviet State Theatre of Drama for outstanding achievements in Soviet theatrical art and on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

Byron. A Byron evening, dedicated to the 125th anniversary of the poet's death, was held at the Central House of Writers in Moscow. Alexei Surkov read a paper on the life and work of the great English poet.

Azerbaijani Epic. The Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan has published the complete text of the Azerbaijani heroic epic "Ker-Ogly," collated by the scientist and folk-lore research worker Takhmas. The traditional epic story of the exploits of the legendary knight and people's bard, Ker-Ogly, belongs to the 17th century. The songs of Ker-Ogly and the legends about him are popular not only in Azerbaijan, but throughout the Soviet and foreign Near East.

Living Standards Improve

Sugar Production this year will increase by 36.5 per cent., 19 new sugar refineries are being put into commission.

More Goods. Output of tea and coffee is this year increased by 63 per cent., spirits by 44 per cent., cigarettes by 25 per cent., and toilet soap 80 per cent.

Price Cuts. Most Moscow stores now have on sale over 60 varieties of bread and cakes. In March many collective farms reduced prices by 30 or 40 per cent. New Spring prices of milk, pot cheese, sour cream and eggs were introduced as from April 1st. The price of milk was reduced by 25 per cent., pot cheese by over 20 per cent., and eggs by 25 per cent. Prices of other dairy produce are reduced correspondingly.

New Shops. This year 118 new shops are being opened in Moscow of which 67 are for foodstuffs and 51 for domestic goods. Some hundreds of market stands are selling different goods on Moscow's streets and squares. Fifty more pavilions are being opened at the capital's collective farm market.

Dressmakers. At a conference of directors of clothing factories in Moscow it was stated that 2,000 new models would be available, and 50 new gown shops opened by July 1st.

Hot Water on Tap. The construction of a new big heat and power trunk pipeline, to provide houses in Moscow with hot water, has been started. More than 300 big buildings have been serviced with hot water, some 25 miles of hot water pipeline being put down in 1948.

In Kara Kum Desert. The building of water mains is now under way to serve

settlements at the oil fields and sulphur mines.

Housing. During the three post-war years 407,000 houses were restored and built in devastated areas of the R.S.F.S.R. instead of 403,000 set down in the Five-Year Plan. In 1948, in addition, 70,530 industrial and administrative buildings were erected. Many villages in Smolensk, Bryansk, Pskov, Leningrad and other regions were practically built anew. During the period the Government granted 1,500 million roubles credits and 20 million cubic metres of timber for rural construction. Priority for houses was given to families of soldiers and guerillas who perished in the war, and to disabled ex-Servicemen.

In three years the "Selstroï" building trust erected in the countryside 805 schools, a number of hospitals, cinemas and clubs. They will build in 28 regions of the Federation 130,000 houses for collective farmers, 9,600 granaries, over 9,000 grain driers and almost 13,000 threshing floors, and sheds for 3,300,000 head of cattle; 1,450 brick-yards and tile factories will be built in collective farms.

Air Lines. New air-lines are being opened to connect Leningrad and the biggest towns of Siberia, Central Asia and the Urals, with the health resorts of the Crimea and the Caucasus. Fast, comfortable IL-12 express planes are used in the main air-lines, the total length of which by 1948 already exceeded the figure projected for 1950.

Social Insurance

In the Factory. The Medical Section of the Moscow Cable factory is equipped with up-to-date appliances and apparatus, has its own ambulances, and its own hydropathic establishment. An X-ray room and laboratory are soon to be opened. There is a staff of eleven doctors and physicians, each attached to a definite workshop or section. The diet of the workers is supervised by the doctors. Last year 350 workers of all grades were sent to sanatoria and rest homes. In 1948 the sickness rate at the factory was reduced by 30 per cent.

In the "Krasny Proletari" last year's social insurance budget totalled 3.5 million roubles. Payment of grants for disability ran into more than 1,700,000 roubles in one year. Grants were also paid for temporary disability to workers who had to tend a sick member of the family. The maternity grants for the period amounted to 150,000 roubles, a considerable part for infants' layettes. A special factory mother and child welfare centre is maintained at the expense of the social insurance. The factory runs a Pioneer Holiday Camp for 800 children, has its own clinic, dietetic dining room and night sanatorium.

SOVIET CHESS

By William Winter

SINCE the Stockholm tournament Soviet chess has been mainly concerned with internal affairs. The only international event in which Soviet players were concerned has been the match between Moscow and Budapest. There were eight players a side, and each of them played two games with every member of the opposing team. The first half of the match was played in Budapest, the second in Moscow, and the final result was 8½—4½ in favour of the Moscow side. Although described as a match between the two cities the encounter took on a national flavour since the Budapest team represented the full strength of Hungary and the Moscow side, although lacking the services of World Champion Botvinnik and the Grandmasters Boleslavsky and Bondarevsky, was very representative. The result reflects credit on the Hungarians who made a much better percentage than any other team which has encountered the Soviet masters. It is evident that the Soviet methods of chess training have penetrated into the new Democracies, for several of the Hungarians were young workers who could not possibly have played chess in the conditions prevailing under the Horthy regime. The match produced some beautiful games which will be regarded as classics as long as the chess art exists. Kotov and Smyslov made the best scores for the Moscow side, the latter often making a level score in the first six rounds, winning his last ten games in succession. Bronstein, joint champion with Kotov of the U.S.S.R., lost only one game, but his new careful style produced too many draws.

More significant than the masters' match was the other event of the winter season, the championship of the Collective Farmers of the Soviet Union. Over 100,000 players entered for this event which included enthusiasts from the autonomous Republics of Buryat Mongolia, Bashkiria, Chuvashia, and even Yakutia, the land inside the Arctic Circle. Chuvashia provided 4,500 players and Buryat 3,500. There is nothing surprising about this. While in Tsarist times the peoples of these regions were completely illiterate, now tens of thousands have secondary school education and vast numbers proceed to institutes and University. In such conditions it is easy to understand the popularity of our great game. Revolu-

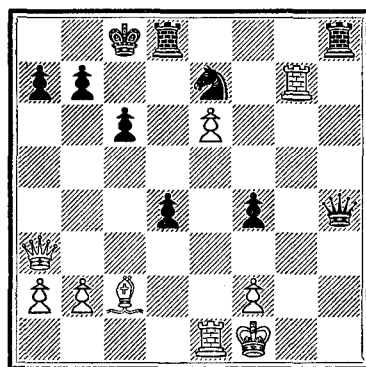
tionary culture breeds chess. We saw that even in the French Revolution.

There is now in progress a championship tournament of Siberia and the Far East. This is being held at Novosibirsk, in Siberia, and at the time of going to Press the lead is held by Shaposhnikov, champion of the Buryat Mongolian Autonomous Republic, who has already reached the rank of candidate master. Novosibirsk seems to be becoming a centre of chess, for there is also being held there an All Union Miners' Tournament with 42 entries. Leaders at present are Kurkletis, mechanic of a Karaganda mine, and Ishchenko a hewer from the Kuznetzk Basin. Grandmaster Flohr is giving a series of theoretical lectures to the miners.

Returning to the collective farmers the final was played at Moscow and resulted in a tie between I. Borishenkov, a book-keeper, and farm worker G. Shuravlev. The two played a match of four games but again made an equal score, so a fifth game was necessary. This was won by Borishenkov who thus secures the title of Champion of the Collective Farmers of U.S.S.R. This is not the place for technical comments but I have played over many of the games and the best of them are such that any master would be proud to play.

The following beautiful ending was won by Shuravlev in the tie match.

The continuation was: 1. P-Q6; 2. BxP, P-B6; 3. R-K3, Q-R8ch; 4. R-Ktl, QxRch; and Black resigns as mate in these moves follows the capture of the Queen.



Black to move

BOOK REVIEWS

Man and Plan in Soviet Economy,

By Andrew Rothstein. (London, F. Muller Ltd.). Pp. 297, 10s. 6d. net.

MR. ROTHSTEIN'S book is both timely and valuable. Anti-Soviet propagandists formerly used the theme that Soviet economy was inefficient. This they have been unable any longer to do since the war; and they have accordingly changed their tune to one of "efficient but inhuman." Soviet economy is a soulless machine, in which the individual does not count and from which all democracy has been banished. The misleading and unexplained distinction between so-called "democratic" and "totalitarian" planning, introduced into governmental publications and pronouncements two years ago, has contributed to this propaganda and helped to throw a smoke-screen in front of our own lack of planning in any full sense of the word.

It is less easy to expose this canard than it is to demonstrate the economic achievements of the decade of great construction in the U.S.S.R. before the war or the efforts and successes of post-war reconstruction. It cannot be done by the citation of statistics; and mere assertion does not convince. It can only be done by the collection and assembly of detailed instances, which by their cumulation will carry conviction. Such a task requires close acquaintance with original sources and a capacity for selecting from these the significant aspect and the telling example. Even when the material has been assembled, there is the task of interpretation and presentation: of both seeing and successfully communicating the picture in the mass of detail.

Mr. Rothstein's capabilities eminently fitted him to do this; and in doing it he has filled an important gap in literature about the Soviet Union and has given us an insight into a too neglected aspect of Soviet planning. The result is a very human story, rich in colour and detail, and told in an attractive and readable manner. Whether for study or for general-interest reading, this is something to be warmly recommended to critic and sceptic as well as to the student and friend of the Soviet Union.

After an opening chapter entitled "Planning amid Difficulties" (in which the intentions and achievements of Soviet planning are summarised for the inter-war period and for post-war reconstruction), the way in which the technique of planning is adapted and utilised so as to evoke initiative at the

factory level is explained in considerable detail. In the author's own words, an attempt is made to show what the Plan in action "has meant for the men and women bearing responsibility for Soviet industry, trade or finance, from the charge-hand and shop-foreman to the director of a great enterprise and the Minister in charge of 'an entire branch of industry or trade,'" in most cases "the examples (being) taken from the most recent materials available." There follows an account of that changed attitude to production on the part of industrial workers which Mr. Rothstein presents as the answer to Mr. Churchill's charge that "Communism rots the soul of a nation." Here the inspiring story is told from the first *subbotniks* of those cold and hungry years of civil war to the production conferences and shock-brigades of the late '20's, the cost-accounting brigades and "counter-plans" of the early '30's, and the Stakhanovites of the 1935-45 years. At the conclusion of this chapter the reader will certainly be "in a position better to judge whether Soviet planning is really the soulless and ruthless regimentation of hordes of dumb and obedient slaves, or whether it does not, on the contrary, *presuppose* the active and critical co-operation of millions of lively individual intelligences"; as he will also be "able to judge better . . . whether the Soviet people can have either interest in, or energies to spare for, military adventures, 'Red imperialism,' 'aggressive expansion,' and the like; or whether a hard-working and self-denying people is not in fact entirely wrapped up, before all else, in cultivating its own garden."

From industry the author takes us to farming, and gives us what is in many respects less accessible information about the functioning of collective farms, and the comparable part played in them by the initiative of individuals and of brigades. Of special interest here are examples both of initiative, and of criticisms for its absence in grappling with the effects of the bad drought of 1946, and examples of the special difficulties and defects in the working of collective farms arising out of the war, against which corrective measures were taken by Ministerial decree of September, 1946. Two final chapters are devoted to the place of trade in the planning system and to industrialisation in Central Asia during the pre-war decade and the war. Of the order of magnitude of the latter, Mr. Rothstein conveys some idea in the following convenient summary:—

"By 1950, under the fourth Five Year Plan, the Asiatic Republics will be numbered among the leading industrial countries of the world. Thus, for example, Uzbekistan will be producing more coal than Sweden or Italy, New Zealand or Southern Rhodesia did in 1938, more oil than Burma or Argentine and nearly as much as Holland, more

sugar than Canada or Switzerland. Kazakhstan is to produce more coal than such countries of heavy industry and advanced economy as Australia or Canada, Holland or Czechoslovakia did in 1938, more oil than Burma or any European country except Rumania, while in the output of electricity and sugar it will be almost on a level with Uzbekistan."

In a useful footnote to an Afterword, reference is made to the "forced labour" propaganda which has been so pervasive since the publication of the Dallin book (which appeared after Mr. Rothstein's book was in type) and to "the wilder mare's nests on which it is based."

One has only the regret that the publishers did not regard the book as worthy of a more pleasing (and less school-text-bookish) binding. The typography of the book is clear and readable.

MAURICE DOBB.

Leo Tolstoy. Ernest J. Simmons. (John Lehmann). 25s.

Tolstoy As I Knew Him. My Life at Home and at Yasnaya Polyana. Tatyana A. Kuzminskaya. Introduction by Ernest J. Simmons. (Macmillan). 25s.

A Treasury of Russian Literature. Selected and Edited by Bernard G. Guerney. The Bodley Head. 15s.

PROFESSOR ERNEST J. SIMMONS, who is chairman of the Department of Slavonic Languages at Columbia University, has written a comprehensive life of Tolstoy in which he makes use of a large amount of material hitherto unavailable in English. It is a scholarly work of distinction, well planned and eminently readable. And if it cannot be said to be a perfect life for all that, it is no reflection on the biographer's grasp of his subject.

It is no easy task to write a life of a great creative artist, and in the case of Tolstoy the task is not made easier by his search for the perfect life and his struggles against his own all too human imperfections. Tolstoy, as Maxim Gorky put it, was a colossus, and there is something of the Laocoon-like helplessness in his attempts to free himself from the deadly grip of the constricting coils of his upbringing and social environment. A biographer like Professor Simmons who does not appear to be himself entirely free from the social and political prejudices similar to those of the ruling caste in Russia in Tolstoy's time, can hardly be expected to succeed in finding the key to the mystery of Tolstoy's life. The main defect of this latest biography of Tolstoy is therefore its failure to convey an impartial picture of the social forces which shaped Russian history during the 82 years of Tolstoy's life,

or to illuminate Tolstoy's part in shaping that history. It seems, besides, to have been written without a really sympathetic understanding of Tolstoy's personality either as a creative artist or as the founder of a new religion.

Professor Simmons takes as the motto for his life, Tolstoy's statement—"I clearly realised that my biography, if it suppressed all the nastiness and criminality of my life would be a lie, and that if one is going to write my biography, one must write the whole truth"—but Tolstoy's standards when he wrote that were already deeply tinged by his extreme religious views, and what seemed to him to be "nastiness and criminality" at the time would hardly have struck a more detached and more charitable person as either so very nasty or criminal. In fact, Professor Simmons seems to have been rather taken in by Tolstoy's severe judgment of himself with the result that he spends too much space on things that are at best to be treated with reserve, and certainly with sympathetic understanding (especially as only a very small selection of extracts from Tolstoy's diaries and letters are given). The relations between Tolstoy and his wife, for instance, form a goodish chunk of this long biography. But Professor Simmons fails to prove their importance to the development of Tolstoy's philosophy of life. Nor does he show (or indeed realise) how much Sonia's social environment was responsible for the bitterness which tainted so much of Tolstoy's teachings. But the most serious fault of Professor Simmons's life is that he almost entirely disregards Tolstoy's creative writings. He makes no attempt whatever to give a critical analysis of any of Tolstoy's great novels. Yet what would Tolstoy's influence as a teacher of a new morality have amounted to if he had not been at the same time one of the greatest novelists Europe had produced?

It is true, Tolstoy later repudiated his own creative achievements, but he was not the only great Russian writer to do that. Before him Gogol had done the same, but one can hardly imagine a life of Gogol in which his writings were disregarded. Tolstoy's disagreement with his wife and the final tragedy it brought about, are no doubt interesting biographical material, but surely far less interesting than Tolstoy's contributions to literature. And yet Professor Simmons achieves the almost impossible feat of disposing of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* in a few clichés, while concentrating almost entirely on things that had no bearing whatever on Tolstoy's genius as a creative writer because they all happened long after Tolstoy had ceased (whether by design or necessity) to be a great artist.

Nor is Professor Simmons altogether happy in painting for us a portrait of Tolstoy the man. As late as 1892, Tolstoy had noted in his diary that a work of art must reveal the whole complexity of the human character. What was so very important, he wrote, "was to show clearly the fluidity of a man's character, that he is at one and the same time good and evil, wise and foolish, strong

and weak." And it is the "fluidity" of Tolstoy's character that Professor Simmons does not succeed in showing to the reader. As a biographer, one feels, he should have put things in their right perspective, provided a convincing analysis of his hero's mental processes, shown a sympathetic understanding of his failings, assessed the achievements of his genius both for his day and for our own day, and fired the reader's imagination and deepened his understanding of the great masterpieces of so unique a creative artist as Tolstoy. All this, however, he either fails to do or does in a way that reduces Tolstoy to the stature of a cantankerous eccentric whose "aristocratic" good manners were only brought into play in the seclusion of his own study, to which even Professor Simmons could hardly have had access.

A fair example of Professor Simmons's method of overlooking the relevant for the sake of the superficially effective is provided by his account of the disagreements between Tolstoy and Turgenev, ending in a challenge to a duel. The impression one gets from reading it, is that one of the two of the greatest novelists was an insufferable boor and the other a ridiculous poltroon.

This may be partly due to Professor Simmons's translation which generally lacks the intimate character of Russian idiomatic speech (incidentally, he always translates *zhutyo* by the incongruous "scent"), but it seems to be mainly due to his inability to understand what really lay at the bottom of Tolstoy's resentment of Turgenev, which, I suggest, was surely not unconnected with Turgenev's natural genius for style which Tolstoy lacked.

On the whole, therefore, Professor Simmons's biography of Tolstoy suffers from an inadequate background and the absence of a keen analytic comprehension and a sympathetic and loving attitude towards its hero. And that is why, I believe, the reader may find it difficult to gain either an insight into the drama of Tolstoy's life or any enthusiasm for Tolstoy as an artist, or any proper understanding of Tolstoy as a prophet.

MRS. KUZMINSKAYA'S (uncompleted) memoirs are no doubt a valuable addition to the biographical material on Tolstoy. Thus far Professor Simmons, who contributes an introduction to the memoirs, is quite right. But I think he exaggerates the value of the information the memoirs contain "on the genesis and development of *War and Peace*." Tatyana Bers (the maiden name of Kuzminskaya) was the tomboy sister of Tolstoy's wife and served as his model for Natasha in *War and Peace*.

But it is easy to exaggerate the importance of a model to a creative artist of Tolstoy's calibre. Tolstoy himself wrote in 1865: "I would have been ashamed to publish any of my works if it merely consisted of copying

someone's portrait or of including some incidents from real life that I happened to remember." The real importance of Kuzminskaya's memoirs lies somewhere else: they reveal to the reader, perhaps more than anything Tolstoy himself wrote, the frightful futility and emptiness of the aristocratic set with which Tolstoy was so intimately connected both by birth and marriage and against which he so uncompromisingly rebelled.

Kuzminskaya's memoirs have been translated "under the Russian translation project of the American Council of Learned Societies," an altogether admirable project, though it is doubtful whether as many as six translators were really necessary for so simple a job. The doubt seems even more justified when one finds ordinary Russian idioms like *smotri zhe* translated as "see here" instead of "mind," don't forget," &c., and the facetious term *predmet*, standing for "beloved" translated literally (in Kuzminskaya's letters to Polivanov) as "object." Still, compared with most of the translations in A TREASURY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE these are very small faults. In America they are fond of such omnibus volumes. In that great country there has always been a widespread demand for "culture" on the cheap, and the present volume, based on the doubtful principle of value for your money, is no exception to this rule. For a reason that is best known to himself, the editor of this *Treasury* has thought it wise not to mention by name a large number of translators (mostly English). Thus he omits the name of Constance Garnett from the translation of Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, although curiously enough he does give the name of the translator of Nekrassov's little poem which Dostoyevsky quotes at the beginning of the second part of the novel.

Of the quality of most of the translations, the editor's own translation of *The Overcoat* can be taken as a fair sample. It is rendered in what seems to be Brooklyn slang, and the Russian word for Civil Servant is invariably translated "bureaucrat," in spite of the fact that if Gogol had wanted to use that word, there is no reason why he should not have used it. "He was," one of the sentences of this translation runs, "very fond of strong effects, was fond of somehow nonplussing somebody, and then eyeing his victim sidelong, to see what sort of wry face the nonplusee would pull after his words," which does not sound like a sentence that Gogol would have cared to acknowledge as his own.

DAVID MAGARSHACK.

Potemkin : A Picture of Catherine's Russia. By G. Soloveytkhik. (Percival Marshall.) 12s. 6d.

THIS is a reprint of a biography which first appeared eleven years ago. The author refers complacently to the "spectacular success" of the first edition and, indeed, Mr.

Soloveyitchik tells a fascinating story well. His sales were no doubt aided by the pornographic aspects of the subject: he not only deals fully with Potemkin as the lover (and husband) of Catherine II, but also touches on his other amorous exploits, including the not inconsiderable feat of seducing all his five nieces.

But the book has other merits. It gives a vivid picture of the 18th century Russian Court and aristocracy: of the gentlemen who kept 300 servants and had a daily dinner of 40 courses, each "brought in by a separate chef wearing a white apron and a tall cap, who had to put his dish on the table, raise his cap, and retire after a deep bow, while twelve butlers and carvers in red uniforms and powdered wigs attended the table." (P. 16). The servants, of course, were serfs: Mr. Soloveyitchik quotes from a contemporary advertisement: "To be sold, a girl of 16 of good behaviour and a second-hand slightly used carriage." (P. 18). Potemkin, as Catherine's favourite and virtual prime minister, received countless presents in cash and in serfs: that was the crude economic basis for the glamorous extravagance which Mr. Soloveyitchik described in such loving detail.

Nevertheless, the book establishes that Potemkin was a serious politician as well as a playboy. Interesting points emerge. The account of Anglo-Russian relations makes ironical reading to-day. Faced with a revolt of the 13 American Colonies (later the U.S.A.) against a system of colonial exploitation, the British Government of the day turned to Russia for help, asking for Russian troops to suppress the rebellion. To obtain Russian diplomatic assistance George, III's Government was prepared to cede Minorca (then a British possession) to Catherine and to accept Russia as a Mediterranean Power. The negotiations came to nothing because of Russian caution. Times have changed!

Mr. Soloveyitchik goes too far in whitewashing Potemkin. He discredits the German propagandist story that Potemkin built artificial villages for the sole purpose of impressing the Empress, and establishes his real contribution to the economic development of the Ukraine and to the Russian Army and Navy. It is also interesting, in view of the use made of anti-Semitism by later Tsarist Governments, to recall that Potemkin formed a Jewish regiment. But Mr. Soloveyitchik slurs over the less attractive sides of Potemkin's character and of Catherine's regime. Potemkin may have been distressed when he saw the corpses of Russian soldiers killed in his battles: but he did nothing to alleviate the serfdom on which the glory of Catherine's Empire was based, and he himself cost the country millions of roubles in more senseless ostentation and luxury. It also makes one think to be reminded that this profligate debauchee, this panderer who made it his business to keep his ageing wife supplied with docile young lovers, was also passionately interested in

religion and enjoyed nothing better than a good theological argument. Another aspect of the Christian tradition!

CHRISTOPHER HILL.

Outlines of Russian Culture. By Paul Miliukov. (University of Pennsylvania Press, U.S.A., and Oxford University Press).

THIS book is an abridged edition of some sections of Vol. II of Miliukov's earlier work on the same subject. P. Miliukov is a well-known historian of Tsarist days. He was leader of the Cadets (Constitutional Democrats) and Minister for Foreign Affairs in the first Provisional Government formed on March 12, 1917. His attitude to historical events is well characterised by his declaration in the State Duma (the Russian Parliament) that they (the Cadets) "were not in opposition to His Majesty but desired to be His Majesty's opposition"—that at a time when even the insignificant rights of the Duma were being stifled, and to a monarch whose utter incompetence, ignorant superstition, and cruel persecution of all progressive forces were notorious.

However, so long as the author sticks to the subject he knows and, within his bourgeois outlook, understands his accounts of the development in Russia of religion, literature, architecture, painting, and music is interesting. One may disagree with many of his interpretations of historical developments but, like the work of many other non-Marxian historians this book, within its limits, gives a useful summary of the progress of culture in pre-revolutionary Russia.

Unfortunately, Miliukov was not content with this. He also launches into a subject of which he knows nothing and understands even less—i.e., religion and culture in the U.S.S.R.

As regards religion, for instance, Miliukov who brings the story down to 1930, repeats all the innuendos about persecution of religion by the Soviets with which the Russian "White" emigrés and Tory anti-Soviet propaganda have made us familiar. And the editor, Prof. M. Karpovich, adding a postscript regarding the years 1930-41 pursues the same line.

Hardly anything about the fact that the various sects outside the orthodox church, received freedom of worship for the first time in modern Russian history only under the Soviets. There is a lengthy description of the schisms and reorganisation of the orthodox church after the Soviet revolution, but very little mention of the fact that the orthodox clergy in general were amongst the most bitter opponents of the Soviet regime. For Miliukov as for M. Karpovich the arrest of a priest was religious persecution—a priest

seemingly could not be guilty of anti-State activities or treason.

Regarding the extension of political rights to the clergy in the Stalin Constitution of 1936, M. Karpovich sees in it only the recognition by the Soviet authorities of the failure of the anti-religious propaganda and of the danger of the then international position. He does not realise that the actual cause of the change towards the clergy was on the one hand the educational and cultural development of the masses of the Soviet Union so that they were no longer so much under the blind influence of the Church and, on the other, that the clergy themselves, particularly the lower clergy, had become largely reconciled to the Soviet regime and could in most cases be trusted to be loyal to it. The extension of political rights to the clergy had the same basis as the granting of complete political equality to all citizens irrespective of their social origin, the institution of the secret ballot and the other electoral reforms of the 1936 constitution, namely, the consolidation of Soviet power, the rise of a loyal Soviet intelligentsia, and the general rise in the cultural level of the masses of the people.

Of the succeeding chapters, the one on literature is perhaps the least satisfactory—both because of the sketchy treatment of the great Russian writers of the past and the completely superficial description of Soviet literature. The author characteristically enough quotes with approval Trotsky's dictum that "during this short transitory epoch of 20, 30, or 50 years which the proletarian world revolution would cover 'the proletariat will have no time to create its own culture.'"

Not understanding Soviet reality Miliukov predicts a decline in the creative activity of Soviet writers and declares: "The danger is aggravated by the fact that a new generation brought up in the period after the October Revolution is bound to enter the literary field. This generation has absolutely no connection with the past and has been educated under peculiar conditions."

M. Karpovich in the course of a post-script sees in recent (1941) Soviet literature "a significant phenomenon—that of nascent Soviet nationalism!" which only shows that he understands neither the past nor the present attitude of the Bolsheviks and Soviet men of letters towards literature, nationalism, and internationalism.

M. Karpovich professes not to understand what is meant by the tendency in Soviet literature of "Socialist realism," and he writes of "Socialist realism" as though it was imposed on Soviet writers from above. That, of course, is nonsense. Socialist realism has been, or more correctly is being, more and more expressed in Soviet criticism, literature, and art because, to put it very briefly, Socialism is now becoming a concrete reality in the U.S.S.R. "Socialist realism" seeks to combine a dynamic, accurate historically, concrete portrayal of reality with the re-education of the people in the spirit of Socialism. It rejects on the one hand the so-called simple, impartial

description of conditions and events as they are and, on the other, the depiction of things as the author would like them to be.

No, this book will not help you to understand the realities of Soviet culture.

ZELDA K. COATES.

Russia: A Short History. By Helen Gay Pratt and Harriett L. Moore. (Cassell). 12s. 6d.

RUSSIA: A Short History, is history made easy, in line with prevailing American progressive education which holds that learning must be made easy; the pill must be smothered in quantities of jam. The book is chatty, with a great deal of space devoted to long quotations from Russian and Soviet literature which make a useful first introduction to literature for many readers. But these quotations take up so much space that history as such comes off rather badly. Among innumerable source references there is not one that could with any accuracy be described as historical.

While the book reads easily and is obviously written by friends, one would hesitate to recommend it as a history. The time sense is so vague, that the reader will never be able to tell exactly in what century events described have taken place, while some historical periods are missing entirely. The Kilevan period, which put the Russia of the time in the forefront of history is not even mentioned. Similarly many of Russia's great figures, either those who shaped her history or who fashioned her science receive no mention. Nor do we learn much if any thing about the *people*, their occupations, the trade and the culture that had a very real existence even in early Russian history.

In their efforts to show that the 1917 revolution was inevitable the authors paint a picture of unrelieved, continuously increasing, oppression and gloom throughout the country's history, only lightened by an occasional revolt. The role of the peasants appears to be limited to suffering, which to judge from the books seems to have occupied all his time, and throughout Russia's history. The creativeness of the Russian people, their natural wisdom, their thirst for knowledge, is excluded from the picture as given here. There is the same blurring, which often becomes lack of understanding, in the post-revolutionary sections, as, for instance, when the authors say "War Communism had failed" and was therefore abandoned. In fact, its adoption was for a limited time and purpose; to allow the Red Army to be fed and clothed while it was consolidating itself and fighting the enemies from outside and from within. Things just happen. Collective farms 'emerge.' They are not apparently the result of political thinking and planning. The essence of Soviet society, its scientific basis, which not only makes planning possible but which can predict with considerable accuracy the success of the plans and the course of events,

has completely escaped the authors in this book. Equally, they are unaware of the effect of the historical process on people; of the new type of man emerging in the Soviet society,

As additional reading to a history, the book will be found very useful.

BFATRICE KING.

The Oxford Book of Russian Verse.

Chosen by the Hon. Maurice Baring.
Second Edition supplemented by D. P. Costello. (Oxford: Clarendon Press); (London: Cumberlege, 1948). 12s. 6d.

THE original *Oxford Book of Russian Verse*, published 25 years ago, covered the span from Derzhavin to Blok. It has now been extended in both directions. Mr. Costello has prefixed sixteen anonymous traditional poems, and added at the end 46 modern ones.

Maurice Baring's preface and his selection have been much praised. In the former he wrote charmingly about the Russian genius, which he found Greek in its simplicity and balance. The selection is the work of a connoisseur, who was attracted by form in poetry, by delicate brushwork and exquisite choice of words. He admired most the love lyric, the elegy and the devotional poem. It is significant that he chose *The Prophet* as the most perfect of Pushkin's lyrics, and overlooked the companion poem of that name by Lermontov. The Pushkin he presents is only a splendid torso; Lermontov, too, does not appear in his full range. Baring hated Belinsky and all his works: hence civic poetry breaks seldom into these pages, and Nekrasov, in particular, loses a lot. So does Bryusov. On the other hand, Count Alexei Tolstoy is there in force, and Fet has ten poems. ("My friend Fet," said Leo Tolstoy, "who at sixteen wrote 'The spring bubbles, the moon shines, and she loves me'; and went on writing and writing, till at sixty he wrote: 'She loves me, and the spring bubbles, and the moon shines!'"). Even on his own ground Baring was not always perceptive: Tyutchev, for example, has only three poems, and neither "The Spring Storm," nor "O, how murderous is our loving," is among them.

Mr. Costello's innovations are welcome, so far as they go. He might, indeed, have given us something from the Eighteenth Century: a sample of Kantemir, whom Belinsky always read with pleasure, at least one poem by Lomonosov, a fable of Sumarokov's, and Fonvizin's "Epistle to his Servants," would have proved that this age was by no means barren. In choosing the modern pieces, Mr. Costello seems to have been embarrassed by his predecessor. They are mostly personal and elegiac: Esenin and Pasternak, for instance, fit naturally into the scheme. Of Mayakovsky we have at least "The Soviet Passport," and "At The Top of My Voice." But on the whole, one might say the selection is timid, and

would not perhaps be approved always by poets themselves.

Mr. Costello thinks that "the latest phase of Russian poetry has not been as brilliant as that which preceded it." However, some of the poetry inspired by the late war is superb. I have just been looking again at Antokolsky's "Son." It struck me as simple, universal, and most moving. So many elegies since "Lycidas" have failed because under the richness of the pall the dead man is somehow lost. But not with this poem. As Antokolsky's son, a junior lieutenant of eighteen, goes to his death in that summer of 1942:

"Dust gritted on his teeth, and a mosquito
Clung to his temple burning hot and dry.
The day was bright, bright as in early
childhood,
"Cuckoo," the bird called, "cuckoo"
peacefully.
Did he remember then some tune or
other,
Or someone's face, a letter someone
wrote?—
While always, cuckooing of many
summers,
The bird kept on his 'peaceful "cuckoo"
note?

"While, cuckooing of many summers"—that line has the mark of great poetry, and it speaks for all of us.

HENRY GIFFORD.

Intermediate Russian Reader.

By Natalie Duddington. (Harrap and Co.) 6s. net.

OPINIONS are divided on the advisability of using children's texts as reading material for the initial stages of foreign language learning.

They are certainly more difficult than much that was meant for adults; in the present volume, intended to be a sequel to the author's First Russian Reader, it is admitted that the two chapters taken from A. N. Tolstoy's *Nikita's Childhood* are more difficult than the Pilot Vodopyanov's *Letters* which, together with other stories of present day Soviet life, come later in the book.

The extracts chosen cover a wide range of subject-matter and certainly make pleasant reading; there are nearly a hundred pages of text, more than half taken from Soviet literature. The first dozen pages of stories written for Russian children are accompanied by what are no doubt the original illustrations—a helpful stimulus to the learner in his arduous task, for the vocabulary here (and throughout the book) is very rich and full of colloquial expressions and racy Russian idiom. At the end of the volume, after a longish extract from K. Simonov on the Siege of Stalingrad, we are briefly introduced to the Russian classics: Dostoevski, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Lermontov, and Pushkin (from whom there are also two short poems earlier).

The printing is beautifully clear and the book is supplied with very useful notes and a full vocabulary.

C. S. ELSTON.

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